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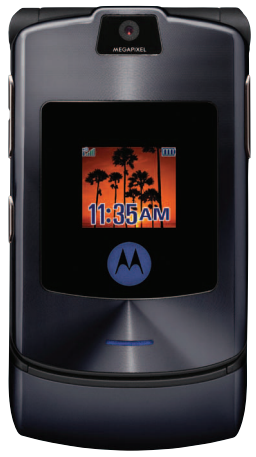

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Ignatieff sends warning

New Liberal leader tells Harper to fix the economy or face defeat

Newly appointed Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff warned Prime Minister Stephen Harper that the government's fate will depend on the Conservatives' willingness to rescue Canada's economy.

There would be no early truce in the high-stakes showdown pitting the Liberals and other opposition parties against the minority Conservatives, the Toronto MP signalled yesterday.

"I want every Canadian to know that the Liberal party is united, strong and ready to provide the leadership we need," he said. "Where Mr. Harper has failed, we can succeed."

He said unless the Jan. 27 budget contains measures to kickstart the economy, Liberals will use the alliance they forged with the New Democrats to defeat the Tory minority — leading to a Liberal-NDP coalition government or an election.

"I am prepared to vote non-confidence in this government and I am prepared to enter into a coalition government with our partners if that is what the Governor General asks me to do," Ignatieff said bluntly. "I also made it clear to the caucus this morning that no party can have the confidence of the country if it decides to vote now against a budget that it hasn't even read."

Ignatieff was endorsed yesterday as interim leader by the Liberal caucus of MPs and senators and later the Liberal national executive.

Ignatieff took a wary view of Harper's request that his party work with the Tories on the upcoming budget.

"The ball is in Mr. Harper's court," said Ignatieff, adding Harper's fall economic package, which targeted public funding for political parties instead of action on the economy, has destroyed the Liberals' trust in the prime minister.

"He can continue down this path of divisive politics or he can start working constructively with Parliament. The choice is his."

Still, he said the Liberals will make recommendations for economic measures.

Last night, Harper telephoned Ignatieff to "congratulate him and also tell him that he (Harper) is available to meet with him any time," said a spokesperson for the prime minister.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 10

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Interim Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff speaks to the media in Ottawa yesterday. Ignatieff said he would defeat the Conservatives unless the Jan. 27 budget included measures to help the economy.

"(Harper) can continue down this path of divisive politics or he can start working constructively with Parliament. The choice is his."
Michael Ignatieff

Facebook top Google search of '08

INTERNET Canadians have Googled the social-networking site Facebook more than any other website this year.

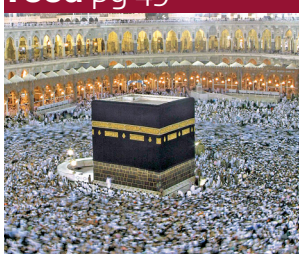
Yesterday, California-based Internet giant Google released the most-popular Canuck search queries during the first 11 months of 2008.

Google says Canadians searched for Facebook — the popular social-networking site — more than anything else, but the top-10 lists also suggest they queried en masse for Britney Spears, the Green party and music lyrics.

It's the first time Canadians have had a peek at their Google behaviour — American lists have been available annually since 2001 — and the results provide interesting research fodder for pop culture enthusiasts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Food pg 49



Celebrating Eid al-Adha

Metro Homes pg 23

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Premier calls on Big Three to release plans to cut jobs

AUTO Canada's three automakers must come clean on plans to cut jobs if they hope to win taxpayer support for the $6 billion in aid they're seeking, says Premier Dalton McGuinty.

General Motors, Ford and Chrysler submitted restructuring plans to Queen's Park and Ottawa last Friday but have yet to publicly reveal what would happen to their Ontario factories.

McGuinty signalled his patience is wearing thin with the firms, which employ over 30,000 workers.

"We're on a two-way street here," the premier said yesterday. "Ontarians are people of goodwill and they do want to lend a hand ... but don't try to pull the wool over our eyes, be honest with us."

GM pledged to release its plan by week's end after meetings with government officials, said vice-president David Paterson.

U.S. legislators last night passed a proposed $14 billion US emergency aid package for the automakers. The move is expected to increase pressure on Canada to respond in kind.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BAILOUT DEAL, PAGE 14

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Council endorses British group's stake in Filmport
Toronto city council has cleared the way for a group led by Britain's Pinewood Studios to buy a 60 per cent stake in Filmport, the soundstage on leased land in the docklands. Filmport has been idle since opening this summer. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local

ETF raids net drugs, weapons

Raids yesterday to arrest two 16-year-olds and a 17-year-old for armed robbery also turned up large amounts of crack cocaine and marijuana, police said. The raids were initiated after three youths were involved in a robbery Sunday in Regent Park. Emergency Task Force officers burst into three downtown homes and came away with drug and weapons seizures to go with the arrests.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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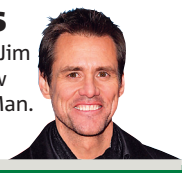
Tomorrow's Metro

Movies



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What's online today.

Read CBS chief challenges Jay Leno to a duel at **metronews.ca/entertainment**

Read Economists claim a one-third GST cut could boost the economy at **metronews.ca/canada**

Read Barack Obama plans to deliver a speech in a Muslim capital at **metronews.ca/world**

Lotteries
Lottery results were not available at press time.

Gift of giving goes high-tech

The Salvation Army, hoping to boost donations, is offering a modern alternative to stuffing crumpled bills in a kettle — donating on the street with one swipe of a debit or credit card.

Michael Uloth, 26, was among the first to use one of two wireless machines the non-profit debuted yesterday at Yonge-Dundas Square.

After digging deep into his pocket and coming up empty, Uloth made an $8 gift with his debit card. He applauded the move to let people give to charity in the same convenient, cashless way in which many shop.

"I don't carry cash very much," he said. "It's very easy. It took two seconds."

The two units will be circulated to locations across the downtown core in an effort to help the Salvation Army reach its $2.5-million Christmas kettle fundraising goal. Kettles carrying the units will have a green sign prompting donors to whip out their Visa, Interac and Mastercards.

The minimum donation using the devices is $5.

STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Salvation Army is testing the use of debit card machines to collect donations in the downtown core this holiday season.

"This is about raising awareness about the issue of poverty," said Salvation Army Capt. John Murray. "It's also raising awareness for those children in need this Christmas season."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

CRIME Two people face charges and a third suspect is being sought after a teen was held up at gunpoint near Pape Avenue and O'Connor Drive. The victim, 17, said three people accosted him in a laneway at 4 p.m. Monday and forced him to return home, where one attacker went inside to demand cash of a 22-year-old mother with an infant. Patrick Benoit, 22, was later charged with eight robberies.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GO adds more trips

Months of track work and the purchase of new diesel locomotives are finally paying off for GO Transit passengers on the busy Lakeshore line, which will have three new trips added to the schedule starting Jan. 5.

The trains are expected to help relieve crowding as ridership for the commuter service continues to grow.

The 7:58 a.m. train eastbound from Oakville to Union Station will originate at Aldershot at 7:32 a.m., making all stops to Oakville, then running express into Union.

GO expects to move the starting point next year to Hamilton, when a new layover facility there is complete.

Because it will use one of GO's new, more powerful locomotives, the train will pull 12 cars, adding 20 per cent more seating to the usual 10-car trains.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Union hub

• The regional rail service carries about 170,000 passengers a day, of whom about 96 per cent begin or end their trip at Union Station.

Earth Hour organizers take aim at Canadian government

ENVIRONMENT Earth Hour organizers hope next year's lights-out event on March 28 will motivate the Canadian government to cut back on greenhouse emissions by signing on to the next climate change accord.

Earth Hour 2009 was launched this week at the United Nations climate change negotiations in Poland.

In 2008, 3.5 million people in the GTA participated, and ultimately up to 10 million Canadians got involved.

Toronto Hydro measured a drop of 8.7 per cent in electricity usage compared with the three-year average, with 150,000 homes off the grid.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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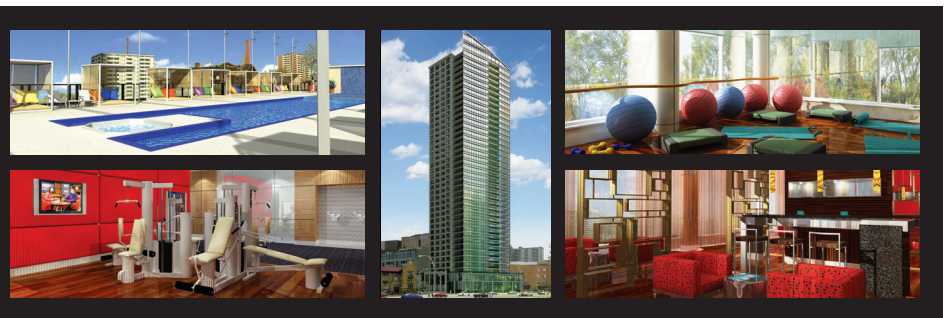

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Man slashed in throat outside store
A brawl that broke outside an east-end Toys 'R' Us store yesterday resulted in a man needing surgery after being slashed in the throat. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Kim Bound brings in a musical toy dog instead of paying for her $20 ticket at the parking enforcement office in Oshawa yesterday. Many motorists took advantage of the city's two-day "toys for tickets" program, which accepts a new toy for a less fortunate child in place of the fine.

A fine Christmas

Motorists bring in toys for parking tickets

Santa's sleigh will be overflowing this Christmas all because a bunch of elves parked their sleighs where they weren't supposed to.

Tickets in one hand, toys in the other, they trooped into Oshawa's parking enforcement office yesterday to settle their fines.

"I'd rather give my money to the kids than you guys," one of Santa's helpers, Dave Garner, told the cashier as he handed over a shiny new Tonka truck. He'd left his car on the street overnight illegally because he "couldn't be bothered" to move it.

He was one of dozens of motorists taking advantage of the city's two-day "toys for tickets" program that accepts a new, unwrapped toy for a less fortunate child in place of the monetary fine.

The value of the gift, which finds its way to St. Nick's sack via Durham Regional Police Service's annual food and toy drive, must equal or exceed the $10 to $75 fine. The program applies to parking tickets issued by the City of Oshawa between Dec. 1 and 11.

> **"At least someone else will benefit from my stupidity."**
> An Oshawa teacher who gave board games for her fines

Garner, 51, was so thrilled with the idea of turning a $20 ticket into something good he promised to return today with another toy — even though he doesn't have another fine to pay.

Kim Bound couldn't contain her enthusiasm as she pulled an electronic dancing, musical "I-Dog" out of a bag.

"This is awesome! I think it's the best idea ever!" said the Bowmanville real estate agent, sheepishly admitting she parked overnight "in the wrong spot" to earn herself a $20 ticket.

An Oshawa teacher, too embarrassed to give her name, 'fessed up to a double whammy: A $50 fine each for her and her husband for parking their vehicles "on the same day in the same place" while they watched a hockey game.

"At least someone else will benefit from my stupidity," she said, offering several board games to make amends.

Last year's program netted $1,000 worth of toys but yesterday's growing stack had surpassed that by the afternoon.

"Most people are quite excited about it," said Laura Hicks, supervisor of parking and vehicle enforcement, who introduced the idea to Oshawa last year after hearing about Kingston's.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Miller rules out higher transit fares for 2009

BUDGET As the economy softens, transit riders have been assured by Toronto Mayor David Miller that they won't have to pay higher fares in 2009.

But despite the need to put construction trades to work, it will be a while before the city starts building any new streetcar lines.

The $1.6-billion, 2009 capital budget approved by city council yesterday allocates $782 million for transit, but most of that money is for repair and maintenance of the existing TTC system.

The city is hoping the federal government will soon step in with an economic stimulus package that will help fund the ambitious $8-billion Transit City plan for a network of dedicated streetcar lines on major streets around the city.

Transit City

- Mayor David Miller is pushing hard for Transit City, which he wants to be funded two-thirds by the province and one-third by Ottawa.

"We're trying to get Transit City projects up and running," city manager Joe Pennachetti told council yesterday. "If the federal government comes to the table, that (Transit City) could happen in this 10-year plan."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

City police back safety of own Tasers

STUN GUNS The Toronto Police Service says it doesn't need to conduct safety checks on its Taser stun guns following reports that older models might give a bigger-than-intended shock. The roughly 400 devices used by officers in the local service were bought after January 1, 2006, officials said yesterday, so none of them are subject to any potential problems illuminated in a recent study. A Dec. 4 CBC news report raised concerns that Tasers manufactured more than two years ago could deliver a greater jolt than advertised.

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Autopsy confirms identity of charred body

An autopsy has confirmed a 60-year-old Pickering woman identified in earlier reports as newspaper carrier Guusje Allen died in a car fire on a Pickering road Saturday. Durham police Det. Mitch Martin, said yesterday, "It's a suspicious death ... We're not ruling foul play out." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Economy hurting York

University president warns global crisis drying up coffers

As if York University didn't have enough problems with the teaching strike that has cancelled classes for five weeks as of today, the president has warned the global economic crisis threatens to curb York's ability to hire new staff, meet operating expenses and provide financial aid to students in need.

In a written statement yesterday to York staff and students, president Mamdouh Shoukri said the university has seen a 19 per cent drop this fall — a loss of $55 million — in the value of its endowment fund, which helps fund York's operating budget, scholarships and bursaries for students, and the salary and benefits of professors whose positions have been created through endowed gifts.

Pension fund

- Shoukri also cited a 19 per cent drop in the university's pension fund.

With the decrease, and little chance Queen's Park will boost grants, Shoukri has directed senior staff to prepare to cut even more than the planned 2 per cent from their budgets in the coming year.

"I am asking that all areas across the university adopt a very cautious and prudent approach to hiring — for both academic and administrative positions," said the statement. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sick kids **From Leaf with love**

RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Maple Leafs forward Jamal Mayers signs 10-year-old Thomas Nitsch's shirt at the Hospital for Sick Children yesterday. Several Leafs players were at the hospital yesterday to spend some time with the kids.

Weather key killer on Everest: U of T study

PEAK Climbers on Mount Everest may not need oxygen or crampons so much as a good weatherman to survive, according to a new University of Toronto study about deaths on the world's highest peak.

The international study of the 212 climbers, out of 14,000 mountainers and Sherpas, the mountain claimed between 1921 and 1996 shows that one quarter of them died because they ran into storms.

"Even though people know there are storms up there, they don't know how bad they can really make it," said Dr. John Semple, a study coauthor says of the need for metrological help on the 8,848-meter behemoth.

Dangers such as as falls, avalanches and lung failure have been the presumed lead culprits behind deaths on the mountain.

But with the deadly and often predictable weather, it is the barometric pressure drops accompanying thunderstorms that are the key health hazards near Everest's summit, says Semple.

It's not just the fact that it's blowing snow and it's cold and windy and low visibility, but also the barometric pressure drops significantly," says Semple, a professor of surgery and an Everest climber himself.

"That dictates how much oxygen there is available to breath."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

First of its kind

- The paper, published this week in the British Medical Journal, is the first to assign an actual cause of death of victims and also confirms the overall mortality rate above base camp on Everest at 1.3 per cent, which is significantly higher than that of other mountains.

Tax freeze eyed in Markham

BUDGET Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti says tough times require a strong dose of empathy from politicians, and he's proposing something GTA residential taxpayers haven't heard for a while: a tax freeze.

"We want to send a signal that we are aware of what people are contending with," Scarpitti said. "We're going to do what we can to lessen the burden to our businesses and residents, in these troubled economic times.

Scarpitti, the GTA's self-proclaimed high-tech mayor — thanks to the presence of IBM's Canadian headquarters there and his support of online voting — is the first to acknowledge that a tax freeze at any cost is unsustainable.

"We want to send a signal that we are aware of what people are contending with."
Frank Scarpitti

"That approach can catch up with you," he says, "because one ultimately has to pass on the true cost to the taxpayer."

But Scarpitti is deadly serious about cutting costs and streamlining services, with the goal of no service cuts and a zero per cent increase for 2009. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Man critical after crash
An Aurora man is in critical condition after he lost control of his Acura northbound on Highway 404 at 3 p.m. yesterday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Activists guilty of trespassing

God made some of them trespass.

Others were driven by their moral obligation under international law to convince company executives of a Burlington company they should get out of the business of producing military weaponry.

In the end, not even a few lyrics from a British peace song, sung for the court by a 71-year-old Toronto defendant more than 20 years after she first sang it in a protest of American missiles in England, could sway Justice of the Peace Ken Dechert from convicting 10 peace activists yesterday of trespassing.

Dechert ruled they broke the law when they refused to leave L-3 Wescam on Nov, 20, 2006, after they tried to seek a meeting with executives of the company that produces guidance systems for missiles used in Afghanistan and Iraq.

They received suspended sentences and were placed on a year's probation with the threat of possible jail time if they break conditions, including engaging in a similar protest.

"They (Wescam) can trespass on other people's right to life ... and if you speak out, you'll be placed on probation."
Matthew Behrens

"It's an outrageous decision," said Matthew Behrens, who was among those found guilty of trespassing at the company.

Behrens said the probation order effectively sends a message that Wescam has the right to violate international law. "They can trespass on other people's right to life in Iraq and Afghanistan and if you speak out, you'll be placed on probation and if you break that probation you'll be put in jail," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mississauga council OKs hydro move

SHAREHOLDERS Mississauga council has voted to spend tens of millions of dollars to buy back a minority shareholder's 10 per cent stake of its hydro utility, Enersource.

The 7-4 vote followed a heated debate of several hours that reopened old wounds and had long-hidden secrets about the utility's history tumbling out on the council floor.

Angry questions were asked by several councillors about a controversial agreement made in 2000, when the city's then-CAO, Dave O'Brien, signed a secret deal with Borealis Infrastructure, the second shareholder.

The final agreement included clauses different from those approved by council. That caused a host of problems because it gave Borealis a veto on a wide range of issue.

"We own 90 per cent; they own 100 per cent veto power," Coun. Carolyn Parrish said.

"This has got to end."

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Yorkdale Mall
York Lanes (York University)
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2501 Yonge St. (at Castlefield)
363 Front St. W (City Place)
455 Danforth Ave.
155 - 720 King St. W
5015 Yonge St.
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8 - 1750 The Queensway

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Mapleview Mall
Milton Crossroads Centre

Brampton

Bramalea City Centre
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2880 Queen St. E
(Hwy. 7 & Airport Rd.)
26 - 55 Mountainash Rd.
10 - 80 Pertosa Dr.

Mississauga

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Erin Mills Town Centre
Heartland Town Centre
Square One
Winston Churchill & 401
6535B Mississauga Rd.
2458 Dundas St. W
G16 - 3024 Hurontario St.
1A - 1370 Dundas St. E
9 - 34 Bristol Rd. E
2 - 4920 Tomken Rd.
101 - 6200 Dixie Rd.

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18 - 2501 Third Line
D3 - 2335 Trafalgar Rd.
760 Pacific Rd.

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Markham

Georgian Mall
Markville Shopping Centre
Pacific Mall
Upper Canada Mall

Richmond Hill

Hillcrest Shopping Centre
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9301 Bathurst St.

Thornhill

Promenade Mall
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8117 Yonge St.

Vaughan

Vaughan Mills Outlet Mall
3 - 4000 Hwy. 7

Woodbridge

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A tree by any other name

Two days after winning a majority, Premier Jean Charest's Liberals have become embroiled in their first debate — to call the festive tree on the legislature lawn a Christmas tree or a holiday tree. The Liberal caucus appeared split over the issue. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Margaret's memoirs

Margaret Trudeau is writing a memoir about her struggle with bipolar disorder. It will be the third autobiographical book for Trudeau, former wife of the late prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tories take swings at Iggy

The Conservatives immediately set their sights on Michael Ignatieff, pegging him as an unelected leader with no mandate to head a coalition government.

Although Prime Minister Stephen Harper has stated he is "willing" to co-operate with the new Liberal leader, Conservatives emerging from yesterday's caucus meeting drove home the message that the selection of Ignatieff was undemocratic and said the Tories would not put down their partisan tools while there is the threat of a coalition.

"I think the basic substance of the debate doesn't change," said Heritage Minister James Moore. "They're still part of a coalition with the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, which remains unelected by Canadians."

Moore insisted "we're prepared to listen to them," but when asked if Conservatives could back specific budgetary proposals by the coalition, such as eliminating a two-week waiting period for Employment Insurance benefits, he shrugged.

"We'll consider it," he said, but described the coalition agreement as rhetoric and platitudes without "a lot of concrete specifics."

Conservative MP James Rajotte said "it very well could be" more difficult for the Conservatives to fight the Liberals, now that the leadership race has been resolved with a leader who appears stronger than Stéphane Dion — a fact that means the Liberal party can focus on raising funds to pay its debts. But Rajotte added: "He may in fact be a stronger leader, but that can only make us compete more and compete better."

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks with a caucus member yesterday following a Conservative party caucus meeting.

> **"Cracks in the coalition are already starting to show."**
> Doug Finley

Tory campaign chair Doug Finley wrote a letter soliciting donations to help "crack the coalition," a copy of which was forwarded to national media outlets.

"One thing is clear: Canadians didn't elect this coalition to form a government," Finley wrote. "Cracks in the coalition are already starting to show.

"We need to drive that wedge home and convince Canadians of all political stripes that this coalition does nothing but weaken our nation."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cosmetic surgery watchdog, regulations to be enforced

SAFETY After years of horror stories concerning unregulated cosmetic surgery clinics, new inspection powers will be given to the provincial medical watchdog and other regulated health colleges.

Health Minister David Caplan proposed new legislation yesterday empowering health regulatory bodies like the College of Physicians and Surgeons to inspect clinics where high-risk procedures, such as liposuction, are performed.

Gone wrong...

- Toronto mother and real estate agent Krista Stryland, 32, died in 2007, after the Toronto Cosmetic Clinic's Dr. Behnaz Yazdanfar performed extensive liposuction surgery.
- Stryland allegedly had 23 incisions made in six different body parts in one surgical session.

"There has been a gap," Caplan told reporters yesterday. "What we will do is give all regulatory colleges the ability to inspect and observe practices, to provide a measure of public safety Ontarians would expect."

Under the proposed legislation, Ontario's medical watchdog will be able to create regulatory standards for private medical clinics, grant approval for them to open and ensure they meet provincial standards through occasional inspections. Currently, no such oversight exists around many of the province's private medical clinics.

While the college has had the authority to inspect the premises, including their equipment, accounts and paperwork, it has never before had the authority to observe doctors performing procedures against a set of prescribed standards.

"Surgery is risky," said Dr. Rocco Gerace, registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. "There is, in hospitals, a framework around how it is done. That framework does not exist in non-hospital facilities. There needs to be a similarly rigorous regulatory framework."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

WAR The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, in which the 100th Canadian soldier died last week, has not hurt the Forces' efforts to find recruits for front-line combat. In fact, officials say it appears to have helped.

LAW A battle for a secret OPP report into a botched murder case reaches the Supreme Court of Canada today. Two men charged with murder walked free in 1997 after a judge found police engaged in massive abuses. The OPP, which conducted its own investigation, later contradicted that finding, issuing a terse news release exonerating the officials. But its 318-page report has remained secret for more than 10 years.

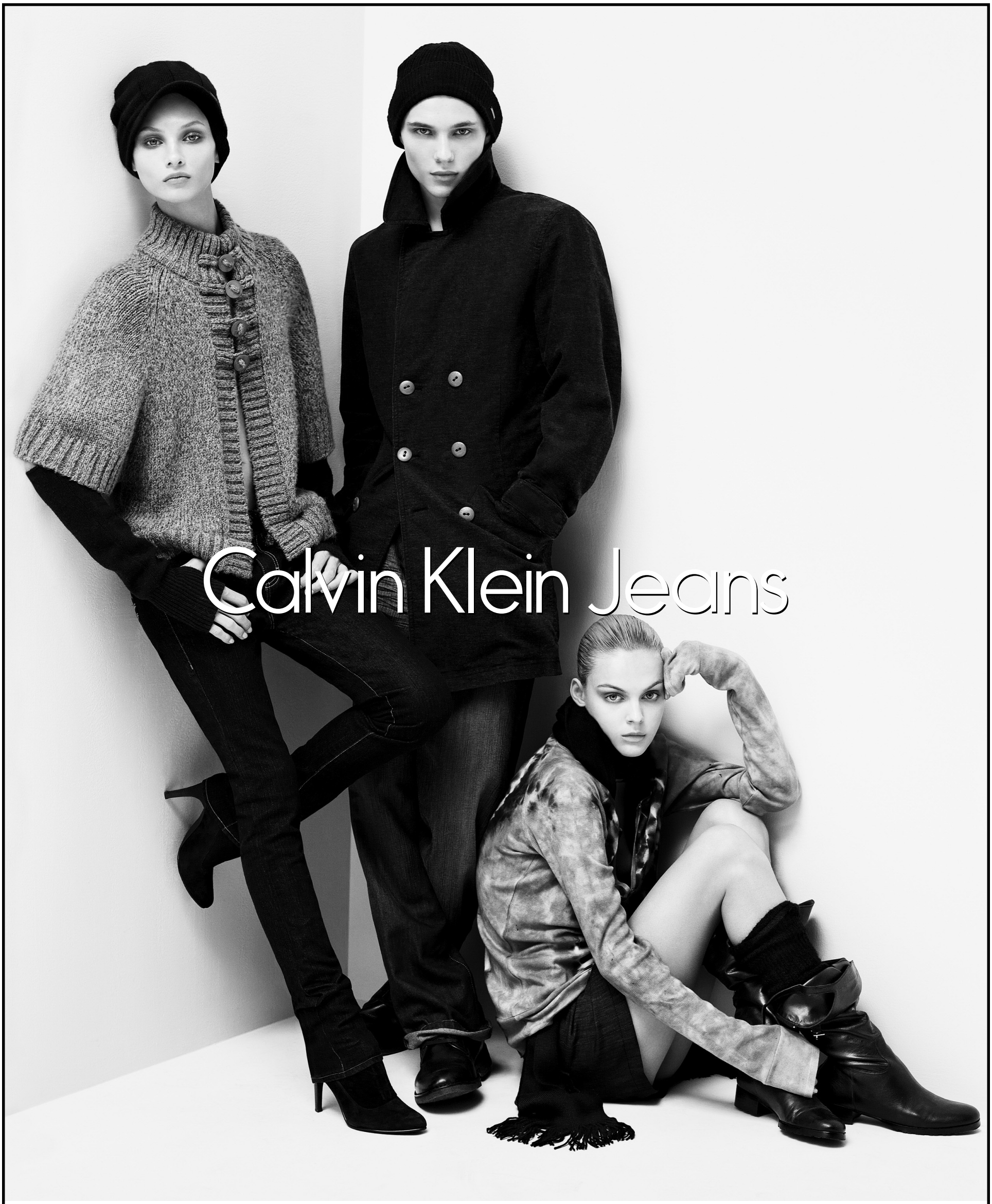
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Province on track for climate targets, but lacks hard numbers

ENVIRONMENT Ontario's climate change action plan is on track to meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets by 2014, even though the first report is missing hard numbers on how it will move toward that goal, says Ontario's environmental commissioner.

Gordon Miller warned the government yesterday that next year's report had better give a detailed annual breakdown measuring the ways each specific program will reduce carbon emissions so Ontarians have transparency in the government's promise to fight climate change.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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Winnipeg police drop some Tasers

The Winnipeg police force has become the latest law enforcement agency to pull some of its Tasers out of service over concerns they may give a bigger jolt of electricity than specified by the manufacturer. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada gets an F in child care

Government services fail our children, says UNICEF report card

Canada ranks last in the first-ever comparison of child care services in 25 developed countries, according to the United Nations Children's Fund.

The report card, to be released today, shows Canada failed on nine of 10 measures aimed at ensuring kids get the best start in life, including providing subsidized child care for 25 per cent of kids under age three and spending one per cent of GDP on early childhood services.

Canada's poor showing represents a lost opportunity for economic growth at a time of economic uncertainty, suggests the report by UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre in Florence, Italy. Building a system of high-quality early-childhood care and education creates jobs and allows parents to work and pay taxes,

"Investing in early child care and education is a key strategy to respond to current economic challenges and to promote economic stimulus and recovery," UNICEF Canada said in a statement. The report, entitled The Child Care Transition, was sparked by new scientific understanding about the importance of early childhood at a time when an increasing majority of children in the world's richest countries are spending a large part of their day in child care, UNICEF says.

"This is a wake up call for Canada. It shows there needs to be money in the federal budget."
Martha Friendly

The benchmarks, which represent the first attempt to evaluate and compare early childhood services for kids under age six, describe a set of minimum standards for protecting the rights of children in their most vulnerable and formative years, the report says. Sweden achieved all benchmarks, while France and the remaining Scandinavian countries met at least eight. Most of Europe, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea met between four and six benchmarks. "This is a wake up call for Canada," said Canadian child care expert Martha Friendly. "It shows there needs to be money in the federal budget and a commitment for Canada as a whole to begin developing a policy framework using the kind of research used in this report."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tempers flare over Ottawa transit strike

TIM WIECLAWSKI
Metro Canada

PICKETS There was little sympathy for OC Transpo employees walking the picket lines on the first day of the transit strike.

During the evening rush hour yesterday, one University of Ottawa student shouted at picketers in front of city hall that she wanted to be reimbursed for the $50 cab fare she was forced to pay to go write a final.

Around the corner, in front of the Elgin Street entrance to the parking garage, another woman called them "idiots."

"We get that all day," said picket captain Norm McDuff. "That's just another one."

There was some support for the union, however. UOttawa grad Mathieu Brule joined the transit employees last evening. "I've never had a complaint to make against bus drivers," he said. "I've gotten home and to and from work safely for the last 10 years. This is least I could do to show support for them."

Alberta **Gun bust**

RANDY FIEDLER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nine weapons and thousands of ammunition rounds were found in a vehicle travelling in Red Deer, Alta., yesterday.

'Fem-bot' sparks international fame, questions for quiet Brampton man

TECHNOLOGY A Brampton man found himself an instant Internet celebrity yesterday after his "robot girlfriend," a five-foot-tall robot with shiny hair, delicate Asian features and silicon breasts, was featured on websites of two British tabloids. He is both happy and embarrassed by the attention.

"She's not really my girlfriend," said Le Trung at his parents home last night. "Aiko's a robot who can do a lot of things and hopefully more soon."

Stories in The Daily Mail and The Sun called Aiko Trung's girlfriend. "I have friends — I don't need to create friends," said Trung sheepishly. He told the British papers that he did not build her as a sexual companion but the software could be tweaked to simulate her having an orgasm. Trung, 33, who made his first robot when he was eight, says Aiko is the result of years of planning and hard work.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mrs. Roboto

- Aiko, which means love child in Japanese, can speak 13,000 sentences in Japanese and English, do algebra, trigonometry and geometry, pick up and identify medicine and tell the weather.

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Crime raid in New Brunswick
RCMP say more than 100 officers descended on eight locations in southern New Brunswick early yesterday, arresting nine people suspected of involvement in organized crime. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada blocking progress in climate change?

Environmentalists said yesterday Canada is playing spoiler at the United Nations Climate Conference in Poznan, Poland.

While they have high hopes for the incoming American administration of Barack Obama, they are critical of Canada's efforts.

"It's such a shame," Dale Marshall of the David Suzuki Foundation said.

"We have Obama saying 'Yes we can,' and Canada saying, 'No we won't.' "

Michael Martin, Canada's ambassador for climate change and the country's chief negotiator at the conference, denies obstructionism, saying Canada is playing a constructive role.

"It's such a shame... We have Obama saying 'Yes we can,' and Canada saying, 'No we won't."
Dale Marshall, David Suzuki Foundation

But the environmentalists don't buy that. "It's becoming increasingly clear that Canada is using the global economic downturn to justify its demand for weak intensity targets, rather than the strong science-based targets the world needs," said Steven Guilbeault of Equiterre.

The activists said Canada seems ready to be the new chief villain. taking over for the Bush-governed United States.

The UN conference is negotiating a climate treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2010.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court weighs in on debate over EI funds

PROGRAM An old political debate over the federal employment insurance program is about to get another go-round, this time with the country's top court acting as arbiter.

The Supreme Court of Canada is set to rule tomorrow on union claims that Jean Chrétien's former Liberal government violated constitutional rules by diverting billions in EI contributions from workers and employers to help balance federal books in the 1990s.

Issues

- The case raises thorny constitutional issues of how far Ottawa can go in using the EI program to fund measures such as educational courses, skills training and job-placement services.

The 300,000-member Confederation des Syndicats Nationaux, one of Quebec's leading labour organizations, wants the money — estimated at just over $54 billion — returned to the EI program to fund future benefits. But it hasn't spelled out exactly how federal authorities are supposed to do that.

The Canadian Labour Congress, which intervened in the case, suggested consultations among the government, employers and employee groups to work out a way of using the money either to boost future benefits or offset future premium increases.

The confederation, backed by an aluminum workers local from the northern Quebec town of Arvida, says federal authority is limited strictly to providing payments to employees who lose their jobs.

All related social services should be left to the provinces, they say. The Canadian Labour Congress differs on that point and has urged the court to uphold Ottawa's power to fund ancillary training and other services across the country.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Obama says he wants to 'reboot' America's battered image among Muslims

U.S. president-elect Barack Obama says he will try to "reboot America's image" among the world's Muslims and will follow tradition by using his entire name — Barack Hussein Obama — in his swearing-in ceremony. He said his administration will be "unrelenting in our desire to create a relationship of mutual respect and partnership with countries." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Shuttle begins journey

The Space Shuttle Endeavour, on its modified 747 carrier aircraft, took off on the first leg of its trip yesterday from Edwards Air force base in Edwards, Calif., back to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Web maps a tool for terrorists

Mumbai attackers believed to have used Google Earth

Internet mapping tools have become so ubiquitous that news the terrorists who killed 171 people in Mumbai last month used Google Earth to plan their attack has caused barely a ripple.

Indian officials reportedly have said the lone surviving gunman told investigators the attackers used Google Earth to familiarize themselves with their targets: Major hotels, a train station, a hospital and an obscure Jewish centre.

It's not the first time the popular web tool has figured into a security breach, but it's possibly the most lethal.

> **"The information is there. It's good for the good guys as much as for the bad guys."**
> Michel Juneau-Katsuya

Security experts doubt anything can be done to limit the effectiveness for terrorists of what is, after all, freely available material.

Tools such as Google Earth merge information from a variety of sources with private-sector satellite photos to provide a detailed, integrated snapshot of a location or region.

"The information is there. It's good for the good guys as much as for the bad guys," says security consultant Michel Juneau-Katsuya, a former counter-terrorism officer with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service

Although the images can be up to three years old, the detail available on Google Earth — once seen only on secret spy satellite images — has been a sore point with the world's military.

The Pentagon has reportedly barred Google from detailing U.S. bases.

Much of Afghanistan's Kandahar province, including Canada's base there, is obscured in Google Earth, yet strangely a supposedly secret Canadian support base in the Middle East is visible in detail and even labelled. THE CANADIAN PRESS

VASSILIS PAPADOPOULOS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Epaminondas Korkoneas, the 37-year-old police officer who is accused of firing the shot that killed 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos, arrives at an Athens prosecutor's office yesterday.

News in brief

CRIME Italian police say they have arrested 70 nurses and hospital attendants who allegedly got jobs in hospitals by using fake diplomas.

SCANDAL Barack Obama called for Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich to resign yesterday, hours after the governor reported for work amid charges he plotted to sell Obama's vacant Senate seat. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republicans oppose $14B auto bailout deal

WASHINGTON Emergency aid for the imperilled U.S. auto industry was thrown into jeopardy yesterday, opposed by Republicans who were revolting against a hard-fought deal between Democrats and the Bush White House to speed $14 billion US to ailing carmakers.

The House was on track to vote on the bailout last night, and Democrats held out hope that it could be enacted by week's end. But a growing number of GOP senators declared they would not go along.

During a contentious, closed-door luncheon with Senate Republicans, White House chief of staff Josh Bolten got an earful of criticism from the rank-and-file, some of whom have already announced plans to block the measure.

Even auto-state Republicans who have pushed hard for a bailout said the measure needed work. Ohio Senator George V. Voinovich said the bill didn't have the necessary Republican votes to pass Congress.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Officers detained pending trial for Greek teen's death

ARRESTS A Greek court ordered yesterday that two policemen be held in jail pending their trial for a teenage boy's shooting death, which has sparked five days of intensive riots in cities across the country.

One officer has been charged with murder for allegedly shooting dead 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos in a confrontation Saturday in Athens. The other has been charged as an accomplice to murder. No trial date has been set.

Earlier, protesters attacked Athens' main courthouse with firebombs during a hearing for the two officers. Riot police responded by firing tear gas, and at least two people were injured.

Police whisked the two officers out a side entrance at the court and drove off in a convoy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More rioting

- Riot police and youths also clashed in downtown Athens during a demonstration by more than 10,000 people against the government's economic policies.

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Martin Luther King estate lays claim to papers
The estate of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is objecting to the planned auction of three historic King documents, saying the papers being offered for sale by Harry Belafonte are the property of the estate. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Girl born from ovary transplant

Doctors in St. Louis said they have successfully transplanted a full ovary from a volunteer, allowing her infertile twin sister to give birth to a healthy baby girl on Nov. 11.

It is the first time an entire ovary has been transplanted and resulted in a live birth, the researchers said.

Writing in the New England Journal of Medicine, they said the method may offer a way to preserve fertility for cancer patients or for women who want to wait until they are older to start families.

One twin went into early menopause at age 15, but the transplanted ovary from her sister restored full fertility and she gave birth at the age of 38, Dr. Sherman Silber of the Infertility Center of St. Louis and his colleagues reported.

Previously they had transplanted the outer shell of the ovary and found that, even if the tissue is frozen, it can restore fertility.

Although six babies were born to eight women using those techniques, about two-thirds of the eggs die from lack of blood flowing through the tissue, and the women quickly slip into menopause after about three years.

Hoping to avoid those problems, the Silber team used a full ovary and reconnected two veins and one artery to feed the graft, which is a challenge because the blood vessels are so tiny.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Infertility rates

- The infertility rate at age 25 is only about 6 per cent. It jumps to 70 per cent by age 40 and is about 95 per cent at age 43, said Dr. Sherman Silber.

Famous blue diamond sells for record $24.3M

ENGLAND A rare blue diamond handed down through generations of German royalty sold for a record-breaking $24.3 million US at auction yesterday in London, Christie's said.

The Wittelsbach Diamond, a 35.56-carat cushion-shaped gem, has often had its colour and clarity compared to the famed Hope Diamond, now on display at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

The rare gem was snapped up by billionaire diamond-dealer Laurence Graff, Christie's spokeswoman Alexandra Kindermann said.

Kindermann said the price — nearly double its pre-sale estimate — was the most ever paid for a diamond at auction, beating the $16.5 million commanded by a 100-carat diamond at a Swiss auction in 1995.

ALASTAIR GRANT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Wittelsbach Diamond, a rare 35.56-carat blue diamond, is held up next to a British first-class stamp.

Christie's said the diamond was purchased by King Philip IV of Spain in 1664 and included in the dowry for his teenage daughter, the Infanta Margarita Teresa. Although she died relatively young, the diamond remained with her husband, Leopold I of Austria, and passed through a succession of heirs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World's coral reefs threatened by global warming: Group

ENVIRONMENT The world has lost nearly one-fifth of its coral reefs, and much of the rest could be destroyed by increasingly acidic seas if climate change continues unchecked, an environmental group warned yesterday.

Global warming and the rising temperature of the oceans are the latest and most serious threats to coral, already damaged by destructive fishing methods and pollution, the International Union for Conservation of Nature said.

"The world has lost about 19 per cent of its coral reefs during the last 20 years," said IUCN's director general, Julia Marton-Lefevre, on the sidelines of the 190-country UN talks on a new climate change treaty.

"If current trends in carbon dioxide emission continue, many of the remaining reefs will be lost in the next 20 to 40 years," she told reporters.

"Climate change must be limited to the absolute minimum if we want to save coral reefs. We need to move forward and substantially cut emissions."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment & Views

Comment

Patience Iggy's virtue

New Grit leader should pass on coalition and rebuild party

Home&Abroad

Andrew Cohen

Canada & world insight

Three years ago, Michael Ignatieff was a political neophyte. Amid much anticipation, he had returned home from Harvard after decades abroad as a journalist, author, professor and broadcaster. As expected, he ran for Parliament and won a seat.

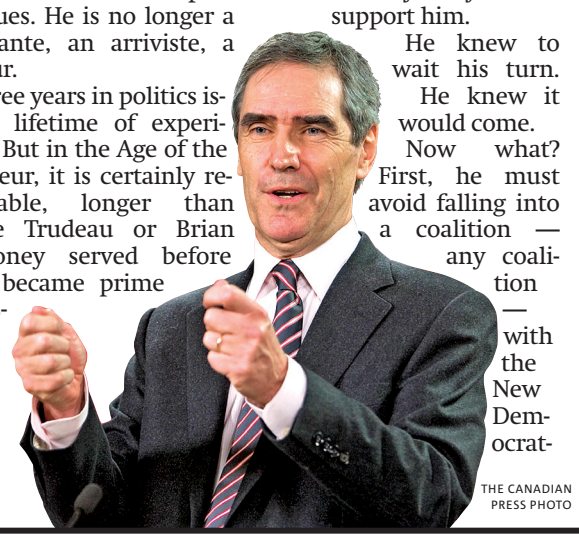
When Paul Martin resigned, Ignatieff ran for the leadership. It was too early for someone who had barely unpacked his bags, and he surely knew it. His campaign foundered and failed.

But today, in one of those strange and wondrous reversals of fortune, Ignatieff finds himself leader of the Opposition. He could be prime minister of Canada within two years, maybe tomorrow.

The man then and now are assuredly different. Ignatieff remains thoughtful, eloquent and telegenic, which helped make him an influential public intellectual in London and Boston.

Now, though, he has learned the bloodsport of politics, which is the critical difference. He has entered the arena. He has paid his dues. He is no longer a dilettante, an arriviste, a poseur.

Three years in politics isn't a lifetime of experience. But in the Age of the Amateur, it is certainly respectable, longer than Pierre Trudeau or Brian Mulroney served before they became prime minister (though Trudeau had been justice minister).



THE CANADIAN PRESS PHOTO

What Ignatieff has now, which he didn't have then, is the credibility he earned in Parliament as deputy leader and party loyalist. Over the last three years, he learned to swallow his reservations about the fumbling Stéphane Dion, even as Dion was self-destructing. He knew to support Liberal candidates in ridings everywhere, knowing that one day they would support him.

He knew to wait his turn. He knew it would come.

Now what? First, he must avoid falling into a coalition — any coalition — with the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois. It would be unsustainable, unpredictable and, for the Liberals, unprofitable.

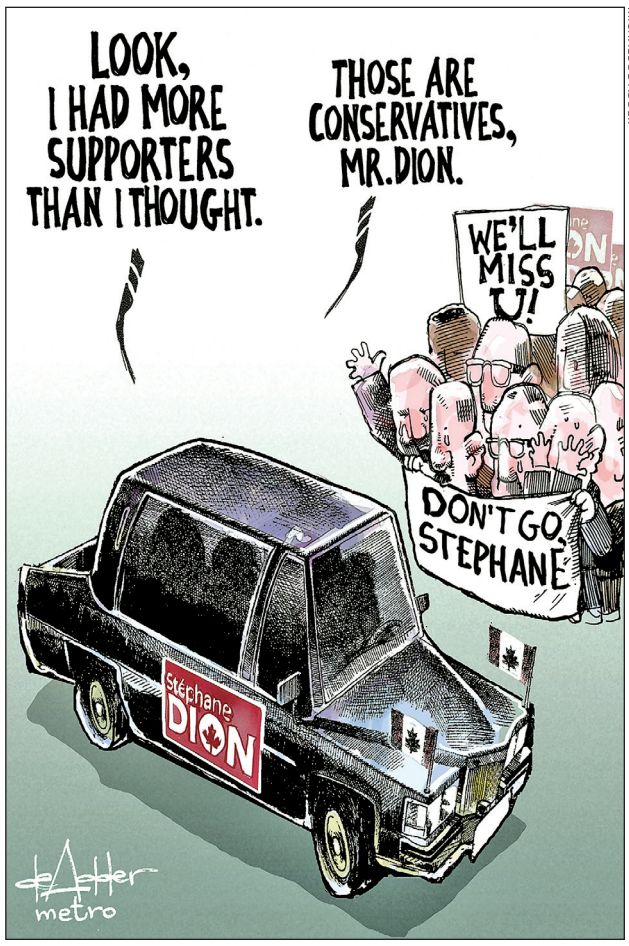
Second, he must renew the Liberal party. This means developing new ideas through a policy conference like the Liberals held at Kingston in 1960, positioning today's party in the centre-left, not the left, as a coalition would. It means finding ways to raise money, for example learning from Barack Obama's pioneering use of the Internet.

It means reorganizing the party structure. It means recruiting candidates, especially in Quebec and the West.

All this will take time. A wise leader will understand this. As Michael Ignatieff waited for the leadership, he will wait for power.

In politics, the foremost lesson is patience.

Andrew Cohen, a professor and journalist, is the author of Extraordinary Canadians: Lester B. Pearson.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

State of Canadian economy rests on Obama

MoneyMatters

Charles Davies

Veteran Business Writer

When it comes to fixing the economy, we had all better hope our next leader gets it right. And when I say leader, I'm not talking about any of the delusional adolescents playing out the ongoing political farce in Ottawa. I mean Barack Obama, Canada's de facto economic caregiver-in-chief.

The hard reality for Canadians is that our well-being is reliant on the state of the U.S. economy. When your neighbour to the South takes three-quarters of your exports and supplies two-thirds of your imports, you know you have a dependency issue. Add in the fact that Americans are the biggest foreign investors in Canada, and that we are their largest single supplier of oil and gas, and there's one truth that we can all hold to be self-evident. If Uncle Sam goes down for the count, we're going to get squashed.

He's already tottering. The U.S. lost more than half a million jobs in December, bringing the year's total to more than two million pink slips. Consumer spending is shriveling, as is business investment in inventory, plant and equipment. And let's not forget the sub-prime mortgage crisis and its potential to worsen as jobs continue to evaporate.

Although he doesn't officially become president until Jan. 20, Obama is already articulating elements of the economic rescue package he plans to take to Congress. Along with business and individual tax cuts, he's looking at raising unemployment compensation, adding to food stamps, providing federal aid to state and local governments and embarking on the largest public works program since the New Deal. Obama is not just promoting road and bridge building. He also wants to invest in things like broadband Internet access and smart electric grids, the kinds of infrastructure investments that would boost U.S. competitiveness once economic growth resumes.

The cost? Who knows, but it could easily surpass the $700 billion US already allocated to bail out the financial system, not to mention the $25 billion US in government subsidized loans approved for U.S. automakers.

Will it work? Nobody knows that either, but it's at least clear that massive government aid is coming because, after all, the U.S. economy is too big to fail.

President Obama will very likely give Americans — and Canadians — a New Year's gift by presenting an aid package to Congress the very week of his inauguration. That would be before Canada's Parliament even reconvenes to consider Sideshow Jim Flaherty's next budget.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including Business Week, Canadian Business, Report On Business magazine, Reuters, and Financial Post.

Letters

Contraception and consent

RE: "Teens need sex education" (Dec. 9).

Josey Vogels promotes the British contraception plan of offering contraception injections for 13-year-olds without parental consent by comparing it to seat belts. Parents would be aware if their child was charged with not wearing their seat belt, but under this plan they can be prescribed medication that alters their blood chemical and hormonal balance without parental consent.

What 13-year-old really has the wisdom to consider the pros and cons of artificial hormone therapy? Side-effects range from headaches and mood changes to high blood pressure and blood clots.

Parents at the very least should have a say in their daughters' medical care.

JAI REID, PICKERING

Canadian politics needs more women in the game

Recent letters have expressed a sense of pride that more women are becoming involved in Canadian political discussions. As a young, female, recent political science undergraduate, I would like to suggest maybe it is not female Canadians are uninterested in politics, but maybe those who are interested do not feel they are offered a fair chance to contribute.

I believe senior level Canadian government roles are mainly held by male employees — causing women to feel stifled and ignored when it comes to government discussions. Just as the boys would dominate the field in gym class, I feel men have dominated the House. If you gave us more of a chance to hold the ball, maybe we could have more of a chance to score.

AMINI KHANNA, NORTH YORK

Taking a stand on ferry seats

Re: "Port eyeing second ferry" (Dec. 9).

While the island airport ferry may have a licensed capacity of 140 (recently increased from 70), there are few fixed plastic seats. Everyone has to stand. With luggage added in, conditions are a disgrace — thanks to our mayor.

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BEAUTY *at the Bay*

Italian wine sold by LCBO turns into water

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario is recalling an Italian wine after finding some of the 1,500 ml bottles of 2007 D'Aquino Pinot Grigio delle Venezie filled with tap water. The problem was at the bottling plant where the bottles are flushed out with water. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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65 Waste Services jobs in dumpster

FREEZE Trash-removal company Waste Services Inc., with headquarters in Burlington, Ont., is cutting 65 positions to streamline administrative functions in Canada and the U.S. It is also closing a Florida office effective tomorrow and has implemented a wage and hiring freeze through 2009. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Weston shops for bargains

RETAILER Armed with nearly $5 billion from recently announced sales and cash on hand, George Weston Ltd., Canada's leading bakery, supermarket operator and luxury retailer, said it's a good time to be scouring the market for good deals.

"Over the next 12 to 18 months, economic uncertainty could lead to great buying opportunities," chairman W. Galen Weston told analysts yesterday.

Weston disclosed its plans after the company announced it had agreed to sell its fresh bread and baked goods business in the U.S. to Mexico's Grupo Bimbo for $2.5 billion U.S.

The deal comes on the heels of Weston's sale of its Neilson Dairy division to Saputo. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Outrage over rates

Borrowers upset as banks fail to match cuts

Patrick Novak, a 32-year-old homeowner, started a Facebook group called Pass on Rate Cuts Canadian Banks just hours after Canada's big six banks decided to lower their prime rates by only 50 basis points, refusing to match the central bank's 75 basis points rate cut.

Yesterday, some of the big banks nudged down their fixed mortgage rates by one-fifth of a percentage point, effective today.

The Consumers' Association of Canada says it has received "hundreds of calls" from across the country from consumers upset that chartered banks are blunting the impact of the Bank of Canada's monetary policy at a time when banks are tapping taxpayer-funded programs to bolster their lending capacity.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has already tripled the size of a mortgage purchase program to $75 billion and has agreed to backstop more than $200 billion in interbank loans at a lower interest rate.

But Laurence Booth, a professor of finance at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, said commercial banks tap a variety of sources to fund loans.

"If the banks could borrow billions and billions of dollars from the central bank in order to fund mortgages, then it would make sense. But unfortunately, they can't," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

What TD charges

- TD Canada Trust's posted 5-year closed mortgage drops 0.2 per cent to 6.75 per cent.
- TD raised variable rates to prime plus 0.6 per cent.

Office Depot shutting stores

COSTS Office Depot Inc. will close nine per cent of its North American stores and cut 2,200 jobs over the next three months while planning to open fewer locations next year in an effort to cut costs.

Shutting 112 stores will reduce the office-supply chain's base to 1,163. It plans to close 45 stores in central United States, 40 in the Northeast and Canada, 19 in the U.S. West and eight in the South. The company said three Canadian locations will close, in Edmonton and in Mississauga and Markham. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. on track for $1-trillion deficit

The U.S. had a budget deficit of $164.4 billion US last month, on track to hit a record $1-trillion deficit for the year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nortel shares tank

Company downplays bankruptcy rumour

Shares of Nortel plunged 23 per cent yesterday amid rumours that the troubled maker of telecom equipment had sought the advice of lawyers to explore a bankruptcy filing in case its restructuring plan fails.

The stock of the once high-flying technology company fell 15 cents to close at 49 cents on the Toronto Stock Exchange despite efforts yesterday by Toronto-based Nortel to downplay the rumour.

"Nortel is a viable partner for the long term," the company said in a statement. "We have no debt maturity until 2011, and we are preserving and strengthening our case position."

"Nortel is a viable partner for the long term. We have no debt maturity until 2011."
Nortel statement

However, Nortel did not deny the report, which was published in the Wall Street Journal. While a Nortel spokesperson told the paper "no bankruptcy filing is imminent," he acknowledged that Nortel has engaged several advisers as it charts its way forward.

The future of Nortel has been cast in doubt as it burns through cash while its telecommunications clients scale back spending in the face of a recession.

Nortel said last month that it would shed another 1,300 workers, freeze salaries and consolidate management positions.

Nortel's ongoing restructuring has already included more than 4,000 job cuts over the past two years. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Productivity stays same: StatsCan

WEAK Statistics Canada reports labour productivity did not change much in the third quarter, extending the weakness that began in the second quarter of 2007. The agency says the gross domestic product of businesses and the hours worked related to this production increased in tandem, at a rate of 0.2 per cent.

Labour productivity in goods-producing industries grew by 0.3 per cent in the third quarter, after five straight quarterly declines.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Air Canada parent moves to wind up operations

ACE AVIATION CEO Robert Milton appears set to fly off into the sunset after Air Canada's parent said it would wind itself up after receiving a favourable tax ruling from Ottawa.

ACE Aviation Holdings, which was created when Air Canada exited bankruptcy protection in 2004, said after markets closed yesterday it would draw on its $811 million in cash reserves to purchase all its outstanding convertible shares and senior notes.

The holding company said it would also seek shareholder approval for a liquidation, which would include distributing to investors its 75 per cent stake in Air Canada.

As a result, the country's largest airline will go back to being a widely held public company for the first time since it entered bankruptcy protection in 2003.

But Air Canada won't receive any of ACE's cash as part of the dissolution, leaving it to fend off an impending liquidity crisis on its own. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In brief

CHINA Foreign investment in China fell to $5.3 billion US in November, down 36.5 per cent from last year, as foreign orders dried up. The slump has led to a wave of factory closures, especially in the southeast, the heart of China's export-driven manufacturing industries.

BRITAIN Prospects for rescuing ailing British retailer Woolworths receded as the company's administrator said yesterday it had not yet found a buyer and was launching a closing-down sale.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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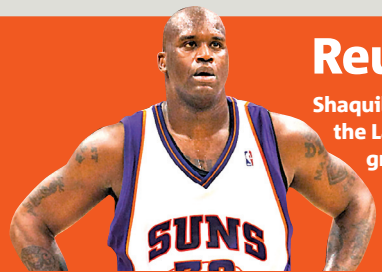
Spray paint enforcement

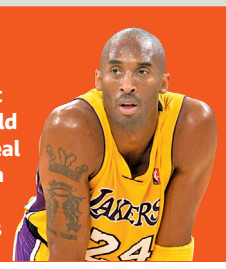
Defenders at penalty kicks will no longer be able to creep closer to the ball in the Argentine soccer league. Using an aerosol spray can to mark the required distance between the ball and opposition players during a penalty kick was approved by the Argentine Football Association yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports



Reunion delayed

Shaquille O'Neal missed last night's Phoenix Suns game against the Lakers in Los Angeles following the death of his 92-year-old great grandmother. It would have been the first time O'Neal tipped off against Kobe Bryant since his freestyle rap at a New York nightclub last summer criticized Bryant. The two teams next play Feb. 26. METRO NEWS SERVICES



SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Triano gets first win

NBA RESULT

Raptors 101 **Pacers** 88

Jason Kapono scored a season-high 25 points, Chris Bosh added 21 points and 10 rebounds and the Raptors snapped a five-game losing streak with a 101-88 victory over the Indiana Pacers last night.

The victory was Toronto's first in four tries since interim coach Jay Triano took over for the fired Sam Mitchell on Dec. 3.

Jamario Moon also had a season high with 17 points for Toronto, including a putback dunk on Jermaine O'Neal's miss in the third quarter. It was the first meeting between the teams since a six-player trade in June that saw O'Neal join Toronto in exchange for T.J. Ford and Rasho Nesterovic.

Ford, who received a mixture of cheers and boos during pre-game introductions, was held to four points before being replaced by Jarrett Jack with just over five minutes remaining.

O'Neal didn't get the chance to make an immediate impact. He picked up two fouls in the first 65 seconds, then spent the next eight minutes on the bench.

Raps guard Anthony Parker did not play because of a sprained left ankle, ending his consecutive games streak at 103.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

T.J. Ford tries to dribble around Jose Calderon last night. Ford was held to four points in 27 minutes in his return to Toronto as the Raptors snapped a five-game losing streak.

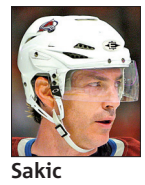
Snow blower knocks Sakic out three months

Joe Sakic's return to the ice has been sidetracked by a snow blower.

The Colorado Avalanche captain, already out with back problems, broke three fingers on his left hand when he tried to clear snow from the machine at his home and will be out at least three months. The Avalanche announced Sakic had surgery Tuesday night for the broken fingers, which included tendon damage in one of them. Team doctor Andy Parker said the procedure went well and Sakic is expected to make a full recovery.

"It's a freak accident. It can happen to anyone," Avalanche defenceman Adam Foote said. "His health is the most important. We'll worry about the hockey part after that."

Sakic was already being treated for a herniated disk, which was expected to keep him out until mid-January. The centre originally strained his back in the weight room in early November, causing him to miss a game against Minnesota.



Sakic

He returned two days later before being sidelined five more games because of his bad back. He hasn't played since hurting it again in his first shift in a game at Phoenix on Nov. 28. Sakic also missed a game this season with an infected tooth.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports in brief

NBA Phoenix has traded guard Raja Bell and forward Boris Diaw to the Charlotte Bobcats as part of a deal that sends guard Jason Richardson to the Suns. Rookie point guard Sean Singletary also goes to Charlotte. The Suns also get forward Jared Dudley and a 2010 second-round draft pick.

NFL The father of New England Patriots quarterback Matt Cassel has died. Coach Bill Belichick said yesterday that Cassel has left the team. Belichick said he didn't know when he would return.

NFL Dallas Cowboys cornerback Adam (Pacman) Jones might miss the rest of the season after injuring his neck against Pittsburgh. Cowboys coach Wade Phillips said yesterday that Jones will at least miss Sunday's game against the Giants because of a herniated disc.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yanks, Sabathia agree to another record contract

CC Sabathia and the New York Yankees agreed yesterday on the framework for a $161-million US, seven-year contract, the richest for a pitcher in baseball history.

The Yankees and Sabathia's agents still need to work out all the details, a baseball official familiar with the talks told The Associated Press yesterday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal has not been completed and the pitcher must pass a physical. Sabathia has the right to opt out after three seasons and become a free agent again.

"I'm sure every team in baseball would love to have him. He's a guy who's an intimidating factor on the mound," Yankees captain Derek Jeter said at the winter meetings.

Yankees general manager Brian Cashman left Las Vegas on Tuesday for a quick trip to the pitcher's home in the San Francisco area, sparking the final stages of negotiations.

"There's a lot of layers in the process. Until that process is completed I'm kind of prevented from saying too much," Cashman said. Cashman made a six-year offer to the former AL Cy Young Award winner Nov. 14, the first possible day to negotiate with free agents, and met with Sabathia in Las Vegas on Sunday and Monday. He had told the pitcher's agents that if it would be helpful, he was willing to travel to meet with the Sabathia and his family in California.

Cashman couldn't recall ever before making a recruiting trip to a free agent's home. He had remembered seeing it on an episode of MTV Cribs.

"When I walked in, I did tell him, it was like: I've been here before," Cashman said.

Sabathia will give the Yankees a new marquee star as they head into the new $1.3-billion Yankee Stadium. His deal will top the previous mark for a pitcher, a $137.5-million, six-year contract agreed to by Johan Santana and the New York Mets last winter. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CC Sabathia went 17-10 with a 2.70 ERA with Cleveland and Milwaukee last year.

Burnett next?

- According to ESPN, the Yankees have offered former Blue Jay A.J. Burnett a guaranteed five-year deal.

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Report: No Avery decision until NHL suspension complete
TSN reported last night that the Dallas Stars will delay making a decision on Sean Avery's future with the team until his NHL suspension is completed. Avery is eligible to play again Dec. 16. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Conrad fights for national funding, spot in 2010

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

Sarah Conrad isn't sure where her national sponsor money went, but she's ready to fight to get it back.

The Dartmouth, N.S., snowboarder, who unexpectedly went to the Winter Olympics in Turin in 2006, is encountering a few bumps in the road on her way to Vancouver 2010.

Turns out the Canadian Olympic Committee's Own The Podium slogan could leave Conrad out in the cold.

"Turin was kind of like, 'Yeah, sweet, you qualified, go and see how you can do,'" Conrad says. "Now, it's like, 'Go and medal or else you're not going at all.' The pressure's on.

"Sometimes, you feel the support, a lot of times, you don't.

"Right now, I'm kinda not feeling the support from big-money sponsors.

"I have to work my butt off and get them back on my side and prove to them I have medal potential."

"I may not live as comfortably as I should, but I'll still go. I won't miss a contest because I don't have money."
Sarah Conrad

The half-pipe rider has rapidly improved since Turin. She posted a number of top-six finishes at major events last season, including a personal-best silver medal at a World Cup event in Stoneham, Que., on her birthday in March.

While that would appear to be enough to guarantee money from big corporate sponsors, Canada's raised bar and the economic climate are working against her.

But Conrad, whose season gears up tomorrow at the U.S. Grand Prix near Denver, says the downturn won't prevent her from travelling to important events. "Money's money, if there's a will, there's a way," she says. "I may not live as comfortably as I should, but I'll still go. I won't miss a contest because I don't have money."

Helping her cause is sponsorship support from Atlantic Canada. Many smaller corporations have gotten behind Conrad, who was the only Nova Scotian to go to Turin.

"They're still really pumped for me," Conrad says.

Conrad's results this winter will be pivotal in her quest for a spot in Vancouver, particularly at the world championships in January and February.

As she tries to make the cut for Vancouver, Sarah Conrad knows that getting funding in Canada was difficult even before the recession.

On the web

- Visit Sarah Conrad's site at www.sarahconrad.com

The 23-year-old, who lives in Squamish, B.C., for much of the year, says she can already feel "Olympic fever" building for 2010, and doesn't want to be left out.

She hopes consistent top-six finishes will get her there.

"I feel good about my riding; I feel strong," she said. "The next year is going to be a trip, but this is what we do. This is our job. I'm going to do my best and see how things end up."

Assessing Leafs' talent brings things into focus

There's a certain bias in every hometown when it comes to the local hockey team. Sometimes it's overly critical, sometimes too fawning, but it's always there.

Toronto is no different. Hall of Famer defenceman Larry Murphy was a goat to the Hogtown faithful, but all he did was tally 61 points from the blue-line in 1995-96 on a team that placed third in its division.

Only in Tomas Kaberle's best season (2005-06) did the steady Czech surpass Murphy's totals, when the current Leaf had 67 points on a non-playoff team.

Given that the Leafs are in rebuilding mode this season, there will be big personnel changes in the future, so I thought it would be handy to do a little comparison between some current Leafs and their equivalents on other teams to show why this squad is where it is in the standings and what they will need to be a contender in the future.

Former GM Cliff Fletcher's famous comments about the team's lack of top-six forwards at the beginning of the season weren't meant to sting egos, but rather ground fans and certain media in fact.

Rolling over current NHL depth charts, it's fair to say the Buds have one of the least intimidating front lines in the league.

If we set a fair standard of 80 points to mark elite status in the NHL, Toronto is one of only four teams not to have a player reach that level in the past two seasons, or at least be on pace for it this year. Phoenix, Columbus and the Islanders are the others.

TheHockeyNews

Pretty exclusive company, eh?

Even defensive-minded teams such as New Jersey and the Rangers have offensive terrors in Zach Parise and Nikolai Zherdev, respectively.

While Matt Stajan is on pace for about 70 points this season, which would obliterate his career-best, Nik Antropov (career-high 56 points last year) and Alexei Ponikarovsky (career-best 45 points two years ago), if rated according to their production, roughly translate into Carolina's Scott Walker and Matt Cullen — who both play on the Hurricanes' second line.

On defence, it's a little trickier to gauge success, since keeping pucks out of the net is just as important as blasting them in from the blue-line, but Kaberle and Pavel Kubina are the current anchors until Luke Schenn gets a little older.

Both veterans are having down seasons defensively, with plus-minus ratings of minus-8 (Kaberle) and minus-9 (Kubina), though ex-Leaf and current Atlanta Thrasher Mathieu Schneider is down there with them and plus-minus is sometimes an indicator of the quality of your team.

Kaberle's peers are two players named Sergei: Pittsburgh's Gonchar and Dallas' Zubov.

That is to say, premier offensive defencemen who aren't quite Norris Trophy contenders, but borderline all-star team (not to be confused with All-Star Game participants) selections at the end of the year.

So what does this all mean?

If it wasn't obvious from the standings, a lot of work needs to be done and it starts at the top.

Even if the Buds bottom out and select centre John Tavares or defenceman Victor Hedman this summer, that's only one potential impact player — and a rookie, to boot.

No, this is a process that requires a patented Brian Burke blockbuster trade if we're even thinking about playoffs next season.

The Hockey News thn.com

Rowing coach Jensen dies at 60

ROWING Coach Bent Jensen, who led the Canadian lightweight men's four crew to a bronze medal at the Beijing Olympics, has died after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

He was 60.

Jensen, who came to Canada to coach at the national level two years ago, died Tuesday in his native Denmark, Rowing Canada announced yesterday.

Heisman finalists announced

NCAA Tim Tebow will go for two straight against a pair of Big 12 quarterbacks when the Heisman Trophy is handed out Saturday night.

Sam Bradford from Oklahoma and Colt McCoy from Texas joined Tebow as Heisman finalists announced yesterday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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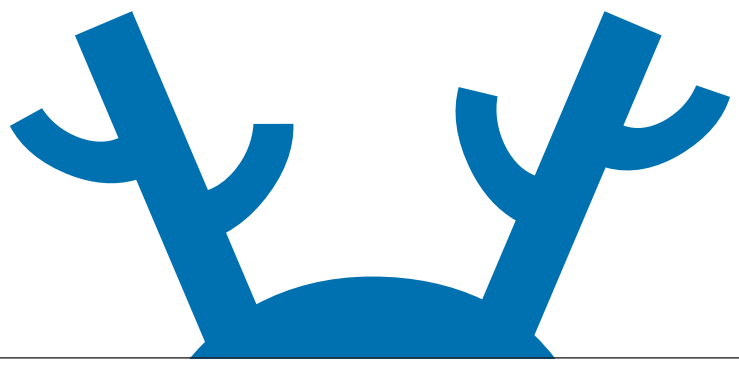

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Metro Homes

Show your cards

A simple plan for showing off a few holiday cards is to drape a pretty ribbon from a row of vertical floating shelves or a bookcase and affix greeting cards with two-sided tape.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Fashion House Suites on King Street West offer European-style kitchens, above left, and a unique, swivelling television stand to separate the bedroom from the living area.

Fashion forward

Suite Talk

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Interior designer Chris Koroknay knows exactly what type of person is best suited to create a home in the trendy model suite of King West's Fashion House condominium by Freed Developments.

He envisions young couples and singles with cool careers and a keen eye for fabulous style. Their desire to blend more expensive furniture with affordable yet chic accessories led him to create a suite with modern lines, rich textures and punchy colours.

"We're sort of tapping into that practical mindset but then also having a little bit of fun," says Koroknay, who is the founder of design firm studio ck. "There are some odd-ball cheapy pieces in there, but then there are some interesting designer pieces, too."

Suites along King Street West will be characterized by thick curtains on the windows. The punchy red fabric will be backlit at night by an indoor LED strip, adding sheen and sparkle to the building while ensuring privacy for the residents.

"I like drapes because they're a nice contrast to glass, and especially with the ripple fold you get a really beautiful continuity," he says.

The 728-square-foot, one-bedroom-plus-den unit features a European-inspired kitchen from German company Poggenpohl. Thick countertops, compact stainless steel appliances and minimal overhead cabinets make the kitchen the focal point.

A unique, swivelling television stand in the centre of the space helps separate the bedroom from the living area, and also doubles as a bookcase. For another interesting touch, buyers can purchase geometric wood panelling to accent their wall. Keeping functionality in mind, the designers also created a square balcony perfect for outdoor entertaining.

Koroknay says that above all, the style of the model suite reflects the neighbourhood's fashion-forward vibe.

"That sort of contemporary, urban Toronto feel comes through this open and modern living," he says.

Suites at Fashion House start in the low $200,000s.

Specific North York sites are best bets

TheHunt

Amit Paul
amitp@rogers.com

Over the past two weeks I've discussed how this buyer's market has been affecting various areas of the GTA differently. This week we'll talk about what this current market means within the North York area.

By North York (NY) I'm referring to the Yonge corridor between the 401 and Finch, as well as the pocket known as Bayview Village, which exists just southeast of Bayview and Sheppard and across from the Bayview Village plaza.

For many years now NY has represented a haven for those who work downtown but either can't or won't pay downtown prices, or choose not to live in the heart of all the hustle and bustle. NY is unique in that how you define it very much depends on which specific building(s) you're talking about. There are some buildings that became bloated a little too quickly and were beginning to suffer even before the rest of the GTA experienced the hit. On the other hand, there are buildings within NY that I always found to be shockingly affordable for what they offered. The Avondale lofts, unfortunately, were mistreated by a select few realtors and the entire building suffered as a result. The Yonge Street buildings just northwest of Yonge and Sheppard, while not the flashiest of buildings, offered very good value even before these uncertain times settled in. In Bayview Village specifically, one complex can aptly be defined as overpriced while the one across the street offers a wonderful building at a price beaming with potential.

Overall, the NY market seems to have been most impervious to the shift in market. In most scenarios you don't see prices free-falling. Of course there are those few buildings that are being forced back down to reality but in many cases those buildings were known to be overpriced and avoided.

If you're looking to sell in NY, the buildings that were managed well will continue to sell better than most while those buildings that struggled previously will, unfortunately, now be filled with owners struggling to unload.

Check out new dreamhomes & condominiums magazine at your nearest DreamBox.

Amit is a Realtor/Developer with Re/Max. amitp@rogers.com

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Decor

Read more in the January issue of STYLE AT HOME magazine. ON SALE NOW! *styleathome.com* | CANADA'S styleathome

European mauves

Bring one of the hottest decor trends for 2009 into your home

Pretty and romantic, this Euro-inspired trend pairs muted shades of purple and plum with weathered antiques in classic shapes, creating a complementary style that's feminine without being over the top.

Colour: Already a fashion fave, purple is huge in home decor this year. While the runways are awash in super-saturated versions, at home go for toned-down shades with a few brightly hued accent pieces.

Contrast: Temper romantic elements with harder pieces. At right, soft purple velvet cushions contrast with the strong lines of the grey chair, while an impressive lantern accents the delicate lines of the console and narrow mirror.

Accents: Up the grandeur with burnished-gold sconces, an oversize lantern and a wooden corbel, which add visual tension without compromising prettiness.

Shape: Restrained versions of classic shapes evoke the look of monarchies past. Gustavian-style antiques give a salvaged, architectural feel but need not be originals; reproduction furnishings work equally well.

— WRITTEN BY STACY LEE KONG

DANIEL HARRISON

Paint: February Amethyst 30RB 34/145, CIL Paints. Indonesian hardwood console $825, French Country. 19th-century Gustavian chair $8,600 per pair, L'Atelier. Mirror $195, wooden corbel $245 per pair, ChairTableLamp. Gilded wheat sheaf sconces $250 per pair, Bronze Home Decor. Reproduction bubbled-glass lantern $1,195, framed intaglio $395, Putti Fine Furnishings. Cushions: Beaumont printed rectangle $47, Crate and Barrel; square silk velvet $425 (26"), $345 (22"), Constantine. Trays $130 per pair, Grange. Courtnay Strie on vinyl wallpaper in Damson $46 per yard, Brunschwig & Fils. For further details, please see p.110 of Style at Home. — PRODUCED BY LAUREN FLANAGAN

Trendspotting

Gilded nature is the height of faux finery

HOME & STYLE New year trends venture into a gilded forest of finery, as faux bois branches out into warm metal finishes. Bleau fork $65 and spoons $42 each, AT Design Group, Toronto, 416-323-0323; *atdesignhome.com*.

— BRETT WALTHER

Café au lait?

Nested server helps you keep it together

HOME & STYLE This nifty invention, from the Finnish design firm Tonfisk, nestles a sugar bowl neatly inside the creamer and stays level while you pour. Newton milk and sugar set, $70 US, FinnStyle, 866-617-6176; *finnstyle.com*.

— BRETT WALTHER

Jewelry gem

Branching out with a double-duty piece

HOME & STYLE Lauren McPhillips, Style at Home web producer, says: "This versatile piece is pretty enough to stand alone but looks just as fabulous with my favourite jewelry hanging from it." Little Birch aluminum jewelry stand in white $38, Urban Outfitters, Toronto, 416-214-1466, *urbanoutfitters.com*.

BRIAN REISER

— BRETT WALTHER

Home & style **Favourite finds from the Maison & Objet decor show**

Style makers from all over the world gather twice a year at Paris-Nord Villepinte Exhibition Centre north of Paris for the Maison & Objet home decor trade show. As if being in the world's most beautiful city isn't inspiration enough, the show itself is a feast for the eyes. Here are a few of my favourite finds from my fall visit. — MARGOT AUSTIN

Square brass lanterns, $300 (10"), $320(14"), Martha Sturdy, Vancouver, 604-872-5205; *marthasturdy.com*.

Left, Peony cushion by Alice Temperley, £495; below, Birdie Blossom by Paul Smith, £275. 56 cm sq. cushions, The Rug Company Boutique, *therugcompany.info*.

Designer Takumi Shimamura's Kaku laptop bag is made of Japanese cedar, canvas and leather. **Kaku bag in Mocha $438, Out of GrAy, 877-968-5892; *outofgray.com*.**

Check out these Skis de Chaise — narrow wooden troughs that cradle the legs of a regular chair, transforming it into a rocker. **C90, Petites Productions, *petites-productions.com*.**

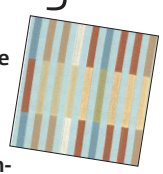
Design solution: Pillows and throws lighten up a too-dark leather couch

Q We have a hand-me-down brown leather sofa and two new beige microfibre club chairs. I wouldn't have chosen leather because it looks so dark, but I can't afford a new sofa right now. Should I slipcover the sofa or is there anything else I can do to lighten it up?

— Diane D'Souza, Ottawa

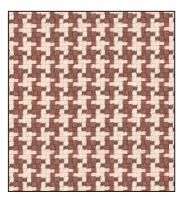
A Pillows and throws to the rescue! They'll introduce colour, pattern and texture, which will make a huge difference in your space. Blues are a crowd-pleaser that are easy to live with and work well with dark brown. Above is a cushion recipe that will revive your room. Next, add two soft textured throws — one in cream and one in a mossy green (found in the striped fabric).

— Margot Austin, senior design editor, Style at Home



Two 22" sq. cushions for the sofa (Ballylanders in Tidal, Robert Allen, through designers, *robertallendesign.com*.)

Two 20" sq. cushions for the sofa (Seregno in Vapor, Robert Allen).



Two 20" sq. cushions, one for each chair (Noleboro in Java, Robert Allen).

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DIY decor ideas
If you're keen on DIY projects, check out the ideas from the folks on TV show Pure Design. Go to hgtv.ca/puredesign, then to Projects & Articles, and check out instructions for a classy gadget-charging station, a storage bench and much more. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Glass is turning up in unexpected places

HomeScape

SOUTH BEACH CONDOMINIUMS FILE PHOTO

In this South Beach Condominium's Delano model suite, a lavender back-painted glass panel provides a striking backdrop for the dining room.

Windows, tabletops, and lovely coloured glass accessories have always captivated the eye. But now all the stops are being pulled out, and glass is showing up in places you might not think common sense and safety would allow.

"Glass, when it is thick enough, is remarkably strong," says Jim Bottrell, president of Toronto-based Adanac Glass, which deals in custom glass and mirror fabrication and installation. "Three-quarter-inch glass is as strong as marble," he assures me. "And when you temper it, it is four times as strong."

The Adanac office and showroom, for instance, boasts an open contemporary glass staircase with glass tread. I didn't initially feel completely confident walking up those steps, but when I did I found they're solid and gorgeous. The glass is thick and has a clear, anti-skid ceramic coating that gives it added strength and toughness.

Glass railings, particularly interior ones, are also appearing more and more. Etched or sandblasted patterns or designs add the luxurious look of customized art. Often, these types of railings look more like solid glass, without much visible hardware.

Frameless shower enclosures and doors can be done in glass with a variety of textures, coatings or etchings. The results can be stunning.

Even bathroom doors can be done in glass — they're soundproof, and the patterns or coatings can obscure all but the vaguest outlines. Thank goodness for that, for there are some areas that just don't do well as an open concept room.

Another eye-opener for me is the use of glass as a countertop. In addition to being strong, three-quarter-inch glass doesn't scratch easily and is heat resistant. Colours, patterns and other special effects can make the countertops unusual and beautiful.

And speaking of different types of finishes, painted glass is a particularly hot trend at the moment. Painted on the back and installed with the shiny side facing out, it gives a clean contemporary look.

And painted glass is also becoming very popular in kitchens as a backsplash. "There are no grout lines to clean," notes Bottrell — a quality, I might add, that's very appealing to those of us who now spend time scrubbing spaghetti-sauce splashes off grout lines with a toothbrush.

Some people even use painted glass as an accent for walls, setting it into the wall singly or in a repeating pattern. Bottrell has installed such panels into a ceiling in the same way, and even cabinets can be fabricated with painted glass doors or panels.

Like the glass, the paint layer doesn't scratch easily. It's chemically cured in the same way that car paint is, leaving a strong enamel-like finish.

If you still have doubts, using thicker glass for added safety can give you some peace of mind, says Bottrell.

And some people — say, those who live with active young children — may do well to wait a few years before considering glass as a decor finish.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

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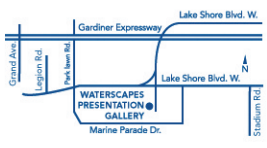

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LegalMatters

Jeffrey D. Cowan
jeff@cowanandtaylor.com

Q I just received notice that my new house is closing after almost three years of waiting. My lawyer sent me a "Statement of Adjustments," which was two pages long and has a lot of extra charges that need to be paid by me to close my much awaited house. What can I do about these?

A I have previously written about "capping adjustments" but I think this topic deserves further investigation.

Contained in your Agreement of Purchase and Sale are a number of clauses that outline the extra costs involved when purchasing a new home. You should focus in on these especially if you are a first-time homebuyer as they can amount to several thousands of dollars at the end of the day. They can range from development charges, meter installations to landscaping fees. All of which are built into the contract and will be applied when you finally purchase your property and cannot be avoided. You should review these with your lawyer when they sit down to talk to you about your contract in your 10-day cooling off period.

I have written in the past about trying to "cap" these adjustments but my goal today is just to make you aware that you could be facing these costs for adjustments (on your bill) on the day of closing.

It is kind of like when you go to buy a car and they add a variety of costs in order to actually take delivery of it. Builders are reluctant to expose these costs in the exuberance of the sales centre hubbub but you should be aware of them, especially when you have budgeted down to the penny to buy your first home.

Jeffrey D. Cowan is the principal of Cowan & Taylor, Barristers & Solicitors, jeff@cowanandtaylor.com. The information contained in this article should not be relied upon as legal advice.

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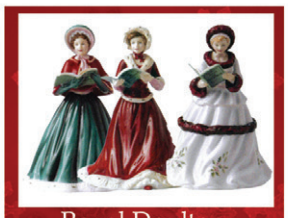
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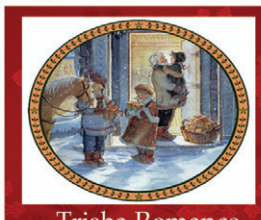
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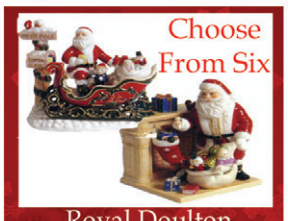

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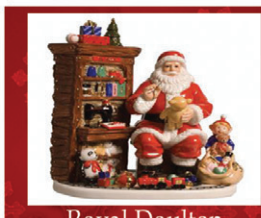
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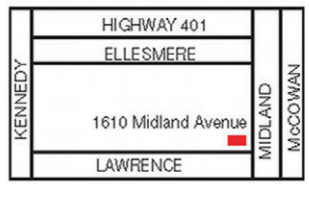

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Holiday Shopping Guide IV

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE BOMBA, STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Get wrapped up

Still looking for inspiration? For gift ideas for everyone on your list, go to pages 28-47.

Beauty Pgs 44-45

A roundup of the best gifts for him and for her.

Cameras Pg 46

Rick McGinnis reviews the best cameras this season.

Accessories Pg 47

Everything from printers to digital photo frames.

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Holiday **Shopping Guide IV**

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#3 Green holiday tips

Visit: chapters.indigo.ca
A Greener Christmas, written by Sheherezade Goldsmith, $28.

#4 Eco-friendly cookware

Available at The Bay, Home Outfitters, Home Hardware
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#5 Telinho the monkey

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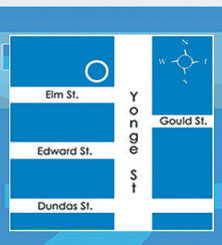

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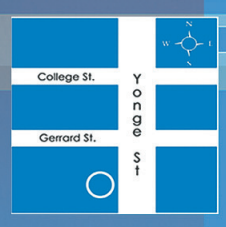

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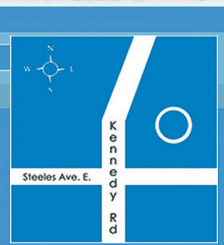

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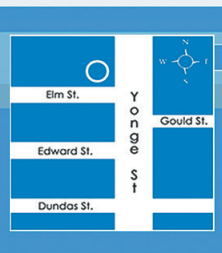

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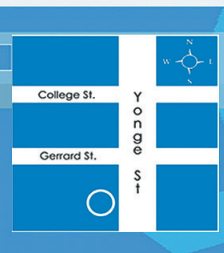

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Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Sweet treats

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

#6

#7

#8

#1 Liquid love

www.starbucks.com/red
Tall Starbucks Espresso Chocolate Truffle, $3.90 plus tax, and gift cards.

#2 Chocolate indulgences

Visit: shoppersdrugmart.ca
Premium Swiss Dark and Milk Chocolate Truffles, $5.99.

#3 Sweet Cheeks

Visit: cakebeauty.com
Brown Sugar Scrub, $32; Buttery Body Bubbles, $18; and Better Bod Rub, $34.

#4 Turtles get retro

Available across Canada
This limited-edition Turtles Retro Tin includes 24 chocolates, $12.99.

#5 Piece of cake

Visit: lush.ca
Christmas Cake Slice soap, by Lush. Each slice is sold by weight.

#6 For the beer lover

Visit: innisandgunn.com
Limited Edition Innis & Gunn Rum Cask Finish, $4.95.

#7 Holiday cheer

Visit: lcbo.com
Bailey's Original Irish Cream gift set with martini shaker, $35.95.

#8 Belgian treats

Visit: shoppersdrugmart.ca
Le Chocolate Holiday collection, $7.99-$9.99. Four other collections available.

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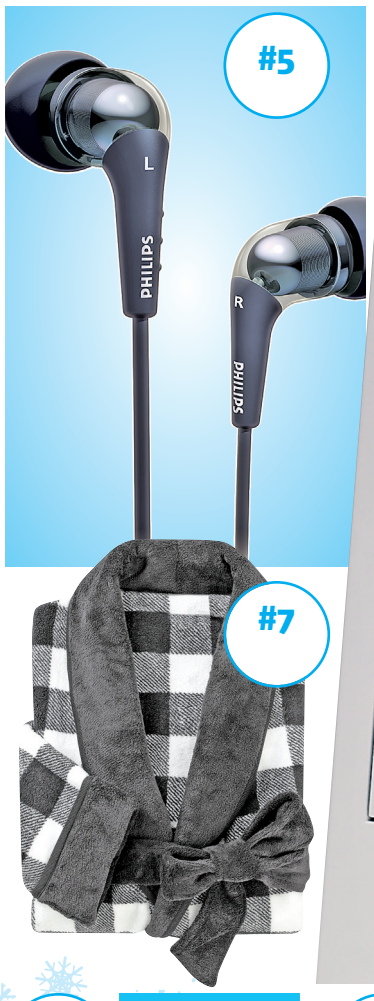
Hbc

For the Red Green fan

We're All in This Together: Red Green — The Man Behind the Character and Vice Versa, by Steve Smith, $24.99. Available only at independent hardware stores across the country. For more, go to wereallinthistogether.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Cool toys for older boys



#1 Make an impact

Visit: homedepot.ca

The Makita Lithium-ion Impact Driver is available at Home Depot for $389.

#2 Dress him up

Visit: harryrosen.com

Ted Baker Archive shirts ($235), in an assortment of colours and patterns.

#3 Help him navigate

Visit: homehardware.ca

Nuvi 255W GPS System features a touchscreen colour display, $319.97.

#4 Steel and titanium

Visit: baume-et-mercier.com

Baume & Mercier Hampton Square men's watch, $4,490.

#5 High-def sound

Visit: philips.com

These in-ear headphones by Philips are available for $129.99.

#6 Stocking stuffer

Visit: shoppersdrugmart.ca

Gift set includes watch with matching tie, tie bar and cufflinks, $19.99.

#7 To keep him warm

Visit: winners.ca

This men's bathrobe ($39.99) is available at Winners.

#8 Watch your power use

Visit: blackanddecker.com

The Power Monitor, $99.99, is available at Wal-Mart, Best Buy, and more.

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Holiday **Shopping Guide IV**

Charming gifts for her

#1 Fit to be tied
Visit: joe.ca
This tie dress, $39, is available at Joe Fresh Style locations across Canada.

#2 Tiffany charms
Phone: 1-800-265-1251
Visit: tiffany.ca
Silver charms, $140-$185, and bracelet, $555.

#3 In the swing of things
Phone: 1-800-653-6289
Visit: oldnavy.ca
Woman's wool swing jacket, $79.50.

#4 Soap & Glory
Visit: shoppersdrugmart.ca
Body care line, which includes Clean on Me, ranges from $9.99-$14.99.

#5 For your princess
In stores across Canada
Visit: swarovski.com
This Tinkerbell pendant, $105, comes with a chain.

#6 All about Elvis
In stores across Canada
Visit: swarovski.com
This Elvis Pendant, $250, comes with a chain.

#7 Help keep her warm
Visit: winners.ca
Purple and grey knit hat, mitt and scarf set, $19.99 at Winners.

#8 Shimmer and shine
Visit: hbc.com
This Vero Moda purple dress, $55, is available at The Bay.

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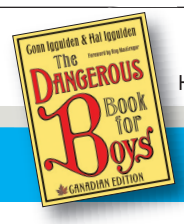

Boys will be boys
The Dangerous Book for Boys — Canadian Edition, by Gonn Igguiden and Hal Igguiden. Available for $29.95 at chapters.indigo.ca. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Just because...

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

#6

#1 For the movie lover
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This Disney/Pixar Wall-E ornament, called Deck the Planet!, is $19.99.

#2 Capture memories
Visit: homesense.ca
This family tree photo album, $14.99, is available at HomeSense.

#3 For the tea lover
Visit: chapters.indigo.ca
This Mighty Leaf Tea Box is available online for $29.99 at Chapters Indigo.

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#5 Get passionate
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#6 Cranberry gift set
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Cranberry Body Polish and candle are part of the New Merry Cranberry Gift, $45.

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Pyjamas make great gifts for everyone in the family.

PJs a hit with kids, parents

Women's Christmas tree style pyjamas by Joe Fresh Style (joe.ca), $15.

Get ready for a pyjama party.

PJs look to be a popular gift this holiday season, as families struggling with high heating bills are bundling up at night, and older kids have turned sleep pants into cool daywear.

"I can't afford to buy gifts just for fun," said Lisa Jenkins, who has lowered the temperature at her Clarkston, Wash., home and is cutting back on presents for her children amid the weak economy. "Pyjamas will keep them warm and will give them the Christmas stuff they're used to."

Jenkins, 40, says she likes to buy PJs that reflect the personalities and interests of her 14-year-old son and 21-year-old daughter, who like to wear pyjamas both at home and outside.

Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at U.S. market research firm The NPD Group, predicts sales of pyjamas for those under age 25 could rise by 5 to 6 per cent this holiday season, while other categories of kidswear may fall as much as 5 per cent.

"It's Mom and Dad saying 'I want to keep my kids warm,' and the kids saying 'It's cool to get me those,'" Cohen says.

In Midlothian, Va., Sarah Maloy's sons, ages five, seven and 10, have inherited her childhood tradition of wearing new PJs on Christmas morning and posing for a family photo at the top of the staircase.

Each year, they get two new pairs of pyjamas, one from each set of grandparents. With a heating bill up 40 per cent this year, Maloy is lowering their around-the-clock temperature to 19 C from 22 C. And she's asking the grandparents for warmer fleece instead of cotton.

> **"It's not just a practical, utilitarian thing. There's trends involved with PJ pants."**
> Patty Corn

"Our gifts of pyjamas have become even more useful," said Maloy, 41. "Now it's really a necessity because no one wants to be cold."

Many kids are happy to get new, cool styles and like to walk their pyjama pants right out the door for school or play.

"They're still a big request," says Patty Corn, 48, whose five children ages 12 to 24 wear the pants out of the house. "It's not just a practical, utilitarian thing. There's trends involved with PJ pants."

Corn, of Allendale, N.J., is buying animal print pants for her 14- and 19-year-old daughters. Her sons, ages 12, 22 and 24, will likely get flannel, possibly with a sports or college logo.

"For the girls, they're going to be really excited about it," says Corn, adding that, to them, the pants count as a good gift.

The choices seem endless. Younger children can be easily pleased with PJs featuring their favourite character, and like to wear them as a costume or to school on pyjama day. Teenagers and their younger tween siblings are asking for PJ pants with plaids, stripes, bold colours and funny expressions, Cohen said.

Boys' sleep pants with skulls, bulldogs and snowboarders can be found at gapkids.com, while girls' prints feature stars and princesses. Victoria Secret's Pink line has pants with large checks in black and white with metallic thread, and others with small polka dots, hearts and plaids.

The PJs-as-streetwear trend emerged over the last two years for older kids and dropped to the pre-teen market for kids as young as nine this year, said Cohen.

"It's the ultimate in casualization," Cohen said. "We've seen casual reach the all-time limits. It's taking fashion to an extreme."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

These men's plaid pyjamas by Joe Fresh Style (joe.ca) are $15.

STOP HAIR LOSS

BIO-FEN PLUS™ is a natural health product used in the treatment of hereditary androgenic alopecia *(AGA)* in adults ***(male or female pattern baldness.)***
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What causes hereditary hair loss?

Each hair grows from a pocket in the skin called the hair follicle. During its growing phase, the follicle has a bulb-shaped bottom, the center of which is called the dermal papilla. The papilla is fed by very small blood vessels, which bring it food & oxygen and remove wastes. The papilla is highly sensitive to hormones and chemicals secreted by the body *(or ingested as a medicine)* which impacts hair growth.

It is believed that some individuals have a genetic predisposition to a receding hairline *(most common in men)* or hair/follicle thinning over larger areas of scalp *(more common in women)*. These conditions result from hormonal changes caused by an enzyme in the dermal papilla called 5-alpha-reductase. This enzyme breaks down the hormone testosterone into dihydrotestosterone *(DHT)*.

Over a period of time, an over abundance of DHT causes the hair follicle to degrade and shortens the active phase of the hair, eventually leading to thinner hair and eventual hair loss.

How does BIO-FEN PLUS™ *work?*

Specific compounds within the herbal extracts inhibit the 5-alpha-reductase *(and therefore reduce DHT)* to prevent or slow down the rate of hair loss. This process is the principle by which the prescription drugs such as Propecia *(finasteride)* work. However, BIO-FEN PLUS™ also contains additional compounds which remove excess cholesterol and testosterone – the building blocks of DHT.

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How long must I use BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

BIO-FEN PLUS™ capsules are usually effective at stopping hair loss within the first two months. However, since healthy hair grows only about 1 cm each month, it may take up to three months before you notice that hair growth is increased or further hair loss is stopped.

Anyone experiencing new growth will see it within four to six months. Once results become apparent, some users are able to reduce their BIO-FEN PLUS™ supplement dose to one capsule every second or every third day. Some clients will continue to take BIO-FEN PLUS™ daily. Once you stop completely, however, your hair growth pattern will slowly go back to the point where you started.

How safe is BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

The ingredient combination in BIO-FEN PLUS™ is generally safe for most adults. However, the following cautions are advised:

Folic acid: Consult a health care practitioner if you are uncertain whether or not you are taking adequate vitamin B12, as folate supplementation can mask a Vitamin B12 deficiency.

Vitamin B3: Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you have impaired liver function.

Vitamin B6: Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you are taking levodopa.

What is the quality of BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

BIO-FEN PLUS™ is manufactured in Canada according to a quality assurance program called Good Manufacturing Practices *(GMP)*. This ensures that the ingredients are tested for their level of quality, potency & purity, prior to production and again prior to sale.

See our website to locate your nearest Health Food Store or Pharmacy that offers BIO-FEN PLUS™ and other quality products from Hair Grow Technology. If you have any questions or comments about our products that target hair loss and support the growth of strong, healthy hair, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Niacinamide *(Vitamin B3)*	10.25 mg
Pyridoxine HCl *(Vitamin B6)*	2.00 mg
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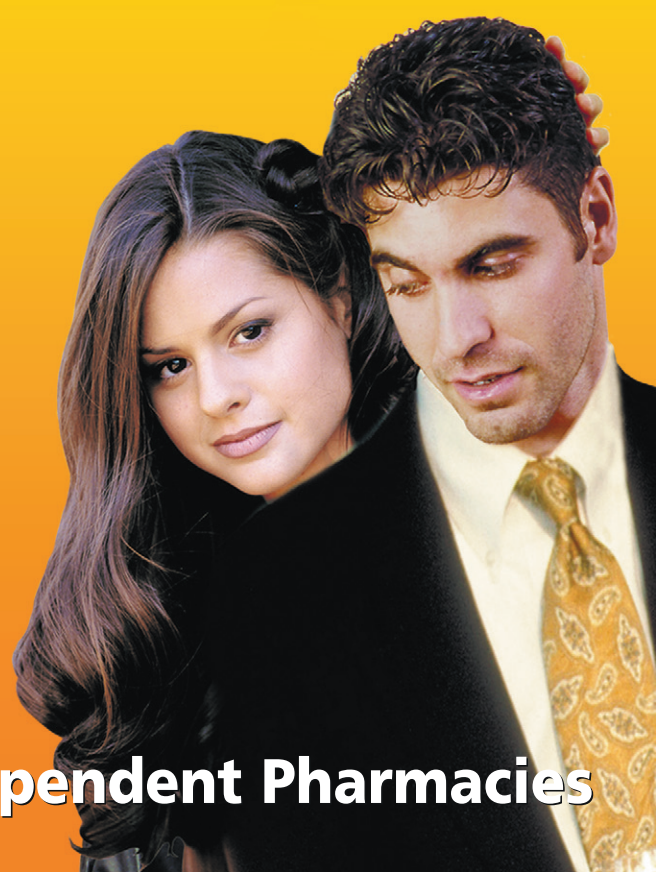

Available at Health Food stores and Independent Pharmacies

Holiday tank top
Christmas tree tank top, $10, at Joe Fresh Style. For more, go to joe.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Gifts for tough customers

Gifts that let teens express their identity and be creative in a cool way are good ones, experts — and teens themselves — say.

Teenagers are tough customers for gift giving. The days of buying them cute ensembles, Hot Wheels and craft kits are so over.

But must we resort only to envelopes of cash or Favourite-Label-Retailer gift cards?

According to many teens, cash gifts are at the top of their wish lists — and they're not a bad idea. They put kids in charge of weighing wants versus needs, which fosters decision-making and budgeting.

But if you're interested in giving something more specific (or more wrappable) below are some holiday gift suggestions vetted by actual teenagers.

None will break the bank. And it should be said that instead of exchanging gifts, some teens might like to help their communities. Families may want to support a child in a developing country, or help a local food pantry or family shelter.

"Sit down and talk as a family about supporting a children's charity," says Alina Tugend, a consumer columnist for The New York Times.

And if the economic downturn means your family's holiday spending will be cut back, don't be afraid to talk about that with teens, Tugend says.

"Some parents may find it good to say everyone gets one store-bought present, and all others have to be homemade in some way," she suggests.

CUSTOMIZED GEAR

Gifts that let teens express their identity and be creative in a cool way are good ones.

• Zazzle.com, a Redwood City, Calif.-based online retailer, has developed a following by letting kids customize all sorts of stuff. You can create a design from scratch or choose from Zazzle's library of images, and Zazzle will then print the design on sneakers, skateboards, T-shirts or other items. The Keds sneaker images, for instance, range from bold argyle prints to celebrity head shots. Zazzle also provides a platform for aspiring designers to sell their creations. (from $50 US)

• More customizable gear is at converse.com, where a pair of Chuck Taylor low All-Star sneakers can be tricked out in one of more than a dozen patterns and colours. (about $60)

• From xtreme geek.com comes a ceramic model train with sheets of graffiti and tag decals to give it that urban edge ($39.99).

GREEN GIVING

• Environmentally aware teens might like the Ecosphere, a small, ecological world in a glass ball, available at Greenfeet.com. Tiny red shrimp, algae and plant life thrive in a sealed globe filled with filtered sea water. There is minimal maintenance involved. (from $57.95)

• Many teens have ditched the backpack in favour of a book tote. An inexpensive alternative is the reusable tote found for 99 cents at most grocery stores. But for a fashionable, right-on-trend statement, go to bhappy bags.com. Happy Bags are made from machine-washable, upholstery-weight cotton with a comfy, poly-webbed handle. Available in many peppy prints, solids and colours. ($24)

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Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Unique and creative gifts will appeal to teens, experts suggest.

PLUGGED-IN PRESENTS

• New cellphones or iTunes cards are traditional teen favourites, but there's more fun to share with Griffin Technology's iKaraoke microphone and processor, which plugs into the car or home stereo. The gadget removes the vocal track so users can sing over the instrumentals. ($49.95)

• Girls might love PBTeen.com's heart-shaped digital photo pendant. The screen displays a slide show or a single frame. ($29.95)

• Not everyone is a Photoshop wizard, so ipopmyphoto.com does the creative legwork for you by turning any jpeg photo into an image that looks like an iPod ad. ($19.95)

MY PERSONAL SPACE

• Rooms can be cosied-up with the Linus Blanket, from Urbanoutfitters.com. Just like the one belonging to Charlie Brown's friend, this blanket is light blue, soft and trimmed in satin. Part of sales goes to support Project Linus, which gives security blankets made by volunteers to needy kids. ($36)

• New Yorker Clinton Van Gemert is making heads turn with his silk-screened hoodies. He imprints images of heads on the sweatshirt hood — pop icons such as Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley, a playing card king, a gorilla, a Greek god, a skeleton and more. The effect is startling, which could be a hit with teens. (Headhood.com, $49.95)

• PBTeen.com is featuring a snazzy hair dryer in three colourful patterns that would make it easy to locate in the messiest room. ($69)

• Uncommongoods.com has a chic travel bag made from laminated newspapers that would be a perfect toiletry or pen/pencil kit. Each one is different. ($30)

• Kids love unusual, fun things. Modernartisans.com has Jeff Davis' snack bowl made of genuine LPs. Choose from several music genres, including jazz, '80s pop and rock. The base of the bowl will be a well-laminated LP label. ($24.99)

• Make anything in the room look upholstered with uptoyoutoronto.com's unusual "padded decals," black and clear stickers that can be applied to furniture or walls for an interesting optical illusion. (Eight for about $16)

Griffin Technology's iKaraoke microphone and processor is sure to please this season.

STOCKING STUFFERS

• Perpetualkid.com's Drip Clips paper clip holder is a miniature sink that comes with 25 standard-size blue clips. The clips stick to the "faucet" like little water droplets. ($7.95)

• The To-Do 12-pack of tattoos, complete with gel pen. That means that assignment lists no longer need to be Sharpied on the back of one's hand — just apply the blank-lined tattoo and head off to school. ($3.99)

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4.
Grant in Sales, our products you hawk
I've bought nothing for you – you want my pet rock?
Were it not for your numbers, we wouldn't get paid
So maybe you deserve a nice pie, homemade
But I haven't the time or the baker's ability
My gift-giving prowess – an exercise in futility...
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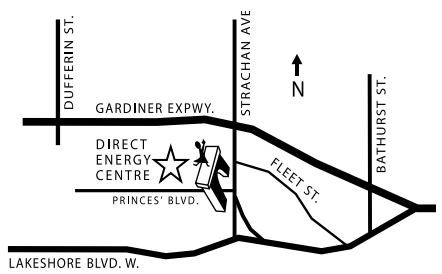

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Bugalug barrettes, $8 for a pair, are created with a silicon gel grip on the inside of every barrette to prevent slippage. Go to bugalugbaby.com for more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Best in beauty of 2008

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada

Hankering for an improved complexion, lusher lashes or super-glossy hair? Here's a round-up of some of the year's most effective stuff to help you get what you need.

Skincare

A new study from the University of Toronto suggests that greens+ plant-based supplements may contribute to the reduction of the stress hormone cortisol, which is linked to obesity, cardiovascular disease, mental health and acne. While further study is required to confirm findings, preliminary results make **Genuine Health healthy skin with greens+** (156g, $27.99) something more than hope in a jar.

Clarins Pure Melt Cleansing Gel ($36) dissolves stubborn make-up and dirt, and rinses cleanly away to leave skin soft, fresh and bright. With lactic acid to help exfoliate, **Dermalogica Age Smart Skin Resurfacing Cleanser** ($46) gently smooths skin as it cleanses.

Makeup

Oily skin's new best bud, **Smashbox Photofinish Light** ($44) is a weightless primer lotion that ensures makeup stays put without feeling mask-y.

GOSH Velvet Touch Eye Liners ($13 each) are waterproof, creamy smooth, and come in a gazillion colours.

Flake-proof **Clinique Lash Power Long Wearing Formula** ($18) beats humidity, rain, tears and oily lids, yet washes off with very warm water. Tied for "best-of" placement is just-released **Lancôme Ôscillation** ($39), which, with its micro-vibrating wand and gel-like formula, curls, lengthens, and volumizes for a faux-lash finish.

The most exciting blush debut since Benetint,

Benefit Posietint Lip & Cheek Stain ($35) brightens with a youthful, long-lasting, sweetly pink flush.

CoverGirl Wetslicks Amazemint lip glosses ($6.99 each) rock for sheer colour, non-sticky and non-drying texture, and a lick of peppermint oil in the mix.

The most makeup bang for your buck, the **Sephora Ultimate Blockbuster Collector's Edition palette** (below) offers more than $300-worth of cosmetics for just $58.

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FASHION ROCKS
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14 Advance Road
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Islington
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For the candle lover
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Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Haircare

Besides giving the longtime-singleton shampoo a partner, **Head & Shoulders Conditioner** ($6.99) helps defeat dandruff and really does leave hair shiny and healthy.

John Frieda Luminous Colour Glaze ($13.99) has a new lighter consistency to crank hair-in-need's sheen way, way up.

This year, curly-haired girls fell for **re:coil shampoo, conditioner** ($20 each) and **curl activator** ($19) from Canadian company **AG Hair Cosmetics**. The trio delivers frizz-free curls with just a bit of product.

Green star

Big green kudos to a growing number of Earth-friendly lines, such as **Live Clean** and **La Coupe Orgnx** haircare and **Cargo PlantLove** cosmetics. Live Clean and Orgnx are formulated with natural and certified-organic botanicals, and housed in recylable bottles; PlantLove steps up with compostable packaging. Canadian-made all three, their eco-footprint is lighter than that of imports. Runner up: U.S.-made natural-based **David Babaii for WildAid** haircare, with support from actress Kate Hudson and 10 per cent of proceeds marked for WildAid, a global wildlife conservation organization.

5.

I.T. Theresa, our viruses you cure
I've bought nothing for you – of that you can be sure!
When the network goes down, my expectations rise
When the holidays come, my gift giving subsides
I hope you won't peruse my personal emails
We must not expose evidence of my gifting travails!...

thegiftcardboutique.ca

Holiday hit list for him

They don't quite speak the lingo, but guys are waking up to skincare that helps deal with common issues, such as razor burn, dry, tight skin, UV damage and cracked lips:

- **Kiehl's Blue Herbal Gel Cleanser** ($30.50) contains salicylic acid to discourage blemishes.
- **Nivea for Men Energizing Face Scrub** ($9.99) buffs off dead skin with a wake-up tingle.
- **Real Shaving Co. Self-Heating Mask** ($11.99) warms on contact to soften beard and skin.
- **Burt's Bees Natural Skincare for Men Shave Cream** ($12) is Earth-friendly for the eco-inclined. A few drops of **Cromwell Cruthers Men's Shaving Oil** ($5.95) instead of shaving cream helps the razor glide for a close, silky finish.
- The **Gillette Fusion Phenom razor** ($13.99) features a five-blade head that creates a flat surface on skin for reduced friction, and has a precision trimmer for tricky areas, such as around soul patches.
- The **Body Shop Maca Root Eye Serum** ($20) contains Peruvian maca root and community-trade sesame and Brazil nut oils to hydrate and de-puff tired eyes.
- **Dermalogica Daily Defense Block SPF15** ($45) is a light yet intensely moisturizing face lotion that fights ingrowns and protects skin from that chapped, tight feeling. Packed with thermal-spring minerals and vitamins,
- **Biotherm Homme Aquapower Dry Skin moisturizer** ($29.50) is actually a longtime fella fave.
- **Gillette 2-in-1 Dry Skin Hydrator + Body Wash** ($5.99) cleanses as it puts a stop to winter itch.
- **Kiehl's Facial Fuel No-Shine Moisturizing Lip Balm** ($12) keeps lips comfy without telltale shininess.

JANINE FALCON /FOR METRO CANADA

Great Imaging Gifts

>> Extended Holiday Hours In Effect

December 11 to December 23
Monday - Friday: 9:00am - 8:00pm
Saturday: 10:00am - 6:00pm
Sunday: 11:00pm - 5:00pm
>> Wednesday Dec 24 9:00am - 4:00pm
>>Thursday Dec 25 - CLOSED
>>Boxing Day Friday Dec 26 - 9:00am - 8:00pm
>>Thursday Jan 1 - CLOSED

Fujifilm J110W

FREE FUJI Leather case w/ J110w Purchase. A $29.99 value

10.0 MP, 5x Wide Angle Zoom
Auto Red-Eye Removal
22.6mm Thin, Metal body
Lithium-ion rechargeable batt.

SAVE $45 $145

SONY H10B

$280 SAVE $19

Sony's DSCH10B Cyber-shot® Digital Camera with High 10x Optical Zoom & 3.0" LCD

Pentax W60

Waterproof, Dustproof and Coldproof design for wherever life takes you.

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Panasonic TZ5

$329 SAVE $50

28mm Wide-angle* Leica DC VARIO-ELMAR lens with 10x optical zoom

SONY A200 w/ 18-70 Kit

The α200 is equipped with an advanced Super SteadyShot image stabilization system to help prevent blurring caused by camera shake.

SAVE $98
$450

Panasonic LUMIX G1
The next generation digital interchangeable lens camera

$789

Introductory Special - **FREE 8GB** High speed SD memory card with the purchase of an Lumix G1 - a $65 value

Also available in blue and black

The LUMIX G1 is as easy to use as a compact digital camera, with the stunning photo quality of a digital SLR camera. It's a new-generation digital interchangeable lens camera that does away with the mirror box and complies with the new Micro Four Thirds System standard.

Panasonic SD9S
High definition SD/SDHC Digital Palmcorder® Camcorder

SAVE $148
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Record to SD/SDHC memory cards
Full HD 1920 x 1080p resolution at 24fps
3CCD Camera system
Advanced O.I.S.
2.7" High resolution (300K pixel) LCD display
10x Optical zoom
Face detection and Intelligent contrast control

The PENTAX K20D digital SLR offers advanced photo enthusiasts an array of exciting PENTAX innovations. The new 14.6 MP CMOS sensor offers superior resolution with maximum control over noise.

SAVE $99 K20D Body $970

SAVE $160 K20D w/ 18-55II $1070

*Details in store. Quantities limited. Offers valid until Dec 17th 2008. E.&O.E.

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Give the gift of memory

The Philips and Swarovski Active Crystals line includes the USB Hear Ware Crystal memory keys, left. The keys retail at $210 for 1GB of storage, and $264 for 2GB of storage. Go to active-crystals.com for more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Presents for aspiring shutterbugs

RICK McGINNIS
rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

THE BASICS:
Olympus FE-360 8-megapixel digital camera ($129)

Canon Powershot SD1100 8-megapixel digital camera ($179.99)

Kodak M1093 10-megapixel digital camera ($199.95)

Olympus Stylus 1050 SW 10-megapixel digital camera ($299)

Sony T77 10-megapixel digital camera ($299.99)

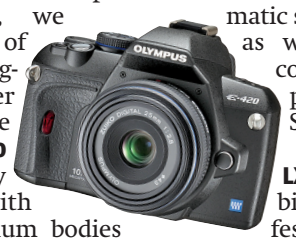
Sony T700 10-megapixel digital camera ($429.99)

Digital snapshot cameras have reached a kind of quality plateau in the last year — image size hovers around the more-than-generous eight- to 12-megapixel range, and shutter lag (at least without flash) has been reduced to a fraction of a second at worst. Which means you're basically buying based on price and which particular combination of features appeals to you.

On the low end, we have the **Olympus FE-360** and **Canon's SD 1100**, both eight-megapixel cameras in familiar styles — 2.5-inch LCD screens with controls laid out around and above the menu toggle button and the shutter on the right side of the camera. Olympus puts its selection of shooting modes down a couple levels in the menu, while Canon puts them one button away. Zoom ranges are about equal, and both cameras passed the acid test of being used by my five-year-old daughter. The Canon, sole among the cameras tested, gives you the option of a rangefinder to look through when bright sunlight makes the LCD hard to use.

Kodak's M1093 is about as basic, though the controls have been tidied up a bit, and Kodak's Smart Capture shooting mode remains one of the most user-friendly automatic shooting modes on the market. **Olympus' 1050 SW** is a flush-lens/sliding-lens cover model that's built like a tank and meant to withstand rough treatment and weather. The back contains the usual array of controls, but Olympus has built in an accelerometer-controlled interface where you can choose and set shooting options by tapping on the camera body — once to select, twice to accept. It's strange at first, but it's responsive and quickly becomes second nature.

On the high end, both in terms of price and design, we have a pair of Sony sliding-lens cover cameras. The **T77** and **T700** are basically siblings with sleek aluminum bodies and touchscreen interfaces on the back. The 3.5-inch widescreen LCD on the back of the T700 is a half-inch wider than its brother, though both cameras let you select the area of the frame you want to focus on with a tap. Image quality is up to Sony's usual high standards.

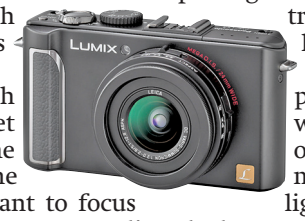


ONE STEP BEYOND:
Olympus SP-570UZ 10-megapixel camera ($449)

Panasonic Lumix LX3K 10-megapixel camera ($549.99)

Olympus E-420 digital SLR w/25mm Zuiko Digital lens ($679)

Once you've gotten tired of the limitations of a point-and-shoot camera, you'll want to move up to something with more range. **The Olympus SP-570UZ** is a "superzoom" camera, part of a range of cameras that have been gaining popularity with amateur photographers tired of the anemic 3x zoom range of pocket cameras. It has a startling 20x optical zoom that can (and did) pick off a hummingbird hovering by a feeder and a full range of automatic shooting modes, as well as manual controls that approximate a full SLR.



Panasonic's LX3 has become a big hit with professionals looking for a small camera for travel and location scouting. It has accomplished this by putting its aspect-ratio controls on the Leica lens barrel, letting you compose with a full widescreen LCD on the back and making its low-light capability the best on the market.

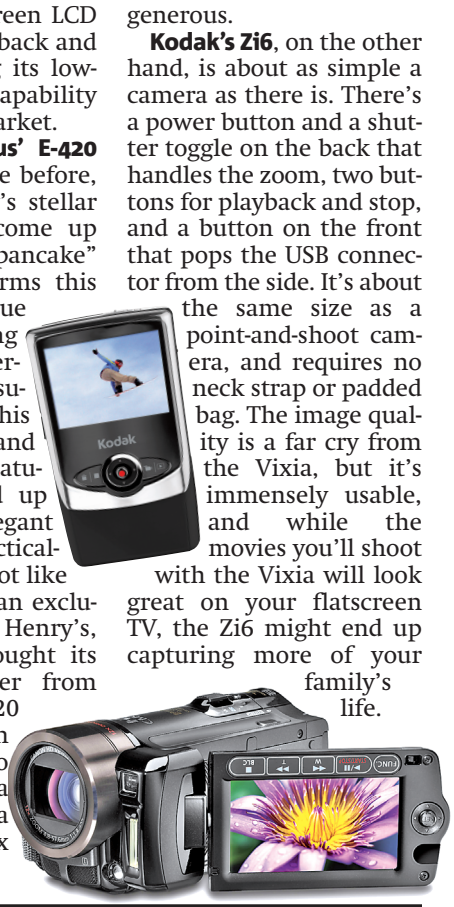
Finally, **Olympus' E-420** was reviewed here before, but the company's stellar lens range has come up with a 25mm "pancake" lens that transforms this little SLR into a true joy. Dispensing with the cumberson zoom that usually comes with this sort of camera — and the flexibility, naturally — you end up with a light, elegant machine that practically begs you to shoot like a pro. As part of an exclusive deal with Henry's, Olympus has brought its Komachi kit over from Japan — an E-420 with the 25mm lens and a retro leather camera case and strap in a very pretty gift box for $779.

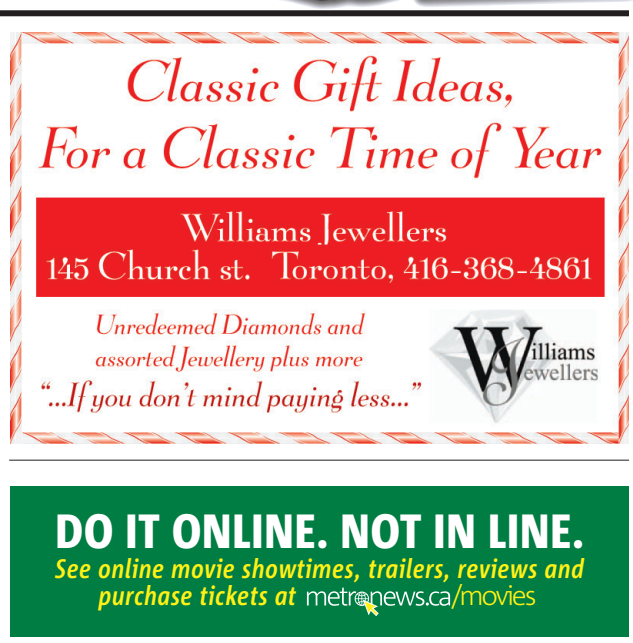
LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION:
Kodak Zi6 pocket digital video camera ($179.99)

Canon Vixia HF11 HD digital video camera ($1,299)

These two machines exist on the opposite ends of the video camera spectrum. **Canon's Vixia HF11** is a full HD camera that's been used by professional crews as a B camera to get cutaways and wide shots. Small — it sits in the hand like a pop can — and relatively stripped down in terms of controls, it records its widescreen HD image to a 32 GB internal memory card, with an expansion slot for an SDHC card. It's easy to hold, and the 12x zoom is more than generous.

Kodak's Zi6, on the other hand, is about as simple a camera as there is. There's a power button and a shutter toggle on the back that handles the zoom, two buttons for playback and stop, and a button on the front that pops the USB connector from the side. It's about the same size as a point-and-shoot camera, and requires no neck strap or padded bag. The image quality is a far cry from the Vixia, but it's immensely usable, and while the movies you'll shoot with the Vixia will look great on your flatscreen TV, the Zi6 might end up capturing more of your family's life.





Get organized
These 6x8 and 9x13 leather and suede magnetic boards come in solid wood frames. Available for $29-$48 at magnique.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

ACCESSORIES:

HP Photosmart B8550 inkjet printer ($299.99)

You might have outgrown your point-and-shoot camera, but have you also outgrown your printer? **HP's B8550** prints up to 13x19-inch images on fine art paper that HP guarantees has a 200-year archival life, as well as your 4x6 holiday snapshots and copies of your gas bill. On HP's matte surface fine art paper, your photos will lose the vivid hues you get on glossy surfaces, but take on a fetching watercolour quality that begs to be framed. The company is also marketing the printer as a must-have for ambitious scrapbookers.

Kodak W820 wireless digital photo frame ($229.95)

Sony DPFD80 digital photo frame ($199.99)

It'll take some fiddling, but **Kodak's 8-inch W820** digital frame will connect to your home Wi-Fi network and stream photos from your collection, bypassing the CF card slot or internal memory. Kodak has also done away with the tiny remote it assumes you'll lose, and put the menu controls on a touch strip around the edge of the very minimal frame — an innovation that's truly notable in the somewhat stagnant digital frame market.

Sony's DPFD80 is equally minimal — a glossy little non-widescreen 8-inch slab that accepts the company's signature Memory Stick card. There's no Wi-Fi, but the LCD screen is up to Sony's high standards, though the stand at the back — a rubberized stick that resembles a tabletop radio antenna — feels a bit stiff and not up to Sony's usual quality.

Crumpler One Million Dollar Home camera bag ($39.99)

Crumpler Six Million Dollar Home camera bag ($119.99)

After years of bland black and beige bags, Crumpler's vivid range of two- and three-tone bags are a joyful slap in the face. The whimsically named line includes a range of camera bags that feature the big, wide Velcro patches the company has carried over from its messenger bags. The **One Million Dollar Home** will fit two digital snapshot cameras and a literal handful of accessories, while the **Six Million Dollar Home** is meant for a pro-sized SLR with battery grip and lens, with space for a flash and three more lenses, all snugly held in its candy-coloured interior. The company is planning a redesign of the line in the new year, with more details and buckles, so if you're fond of the current look, now's the time to buy.

Clickfree HD325 320 GB backup drive ($159.99)

Finally, after all your hard work, you don't want to lose years of family photos — or professional work — with a computer meltdown. There are a lot of backup drives on the market, but the **Clickfree** is the simplest I've seen — just plug it into a USB slot and it'll begin the process of backing up all your essential computer info. After the initial install, you can reconfigure it to concentrate on just one destination — like your precious photo library — and rest easy, provided you remember to repeat the ritual weekly or monthly.

6.
Why must I wait to the last minute, belated?
I stink at time management and all things related
No pity have they for my work deluge
Give company mugs, they'll think I'm a Scrooge

Last Installment Coming Tomorrow...

thegiftcardboutique.ca

Reduce holiday stress

Holidays can be a particularly stressful time for everyone. Gift buying, store lineups, mall crowds, maxed out credit cards — who wouldn't feel stressed?

The good news is that reducing holiday pressures is as easy as a shift in your mindset. Keeping things in perspective and appreciating the things you have can go a long way to reduce anxiety at holiday time. Here are some ways you can put your holiday stress in perspective.

Count your blessings
Remember those less fortunate in other countries and remember all the things you have received in the last year. We like to dwell on the downside of life, but when we look at what little children in need don't have, we can't help but feel blessed.

Reach out to others
If you think your situation is tough, consider how others, especially those in need, are spending Christmas. Not only will this give you some perspective, but making a donation in the name of someone on your gift list is a great way to create a sense of personal satisfaction that you are helping. NEWS CANADA

Next week's lineup

GIFT GUIDES For a roundup of the best books for adults and kids, tech gifts and much more, pick up Metro's next Holiday Shopping Guide on Dec. 18.

14 shopping days remain before Christmas.

Courtesy of DRAFT

The November/December issue of DRAFT magazine features 9 Essential Holiday Cocktails: Snowflake, Yule Berry Tini, Peppermint Froth, Eggnog White Holiday, Poinsettia Cocktail, Chocolate Eggnog Martini, Baked Apple Pie Cocktail, World Peace Cocktail and Cranberry Sauced. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

For the Eggnog White Holiday cocktail, you'll need: 1 ounce White Chocolate Godiva Liqueur; 1 ounce Navan Cognac and eggnog.

November/December issue of DRAFT Magazine

And then ...

Shake all ingredients in a shaker with ice and strain into a glass. Garnish with gold flakes.

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

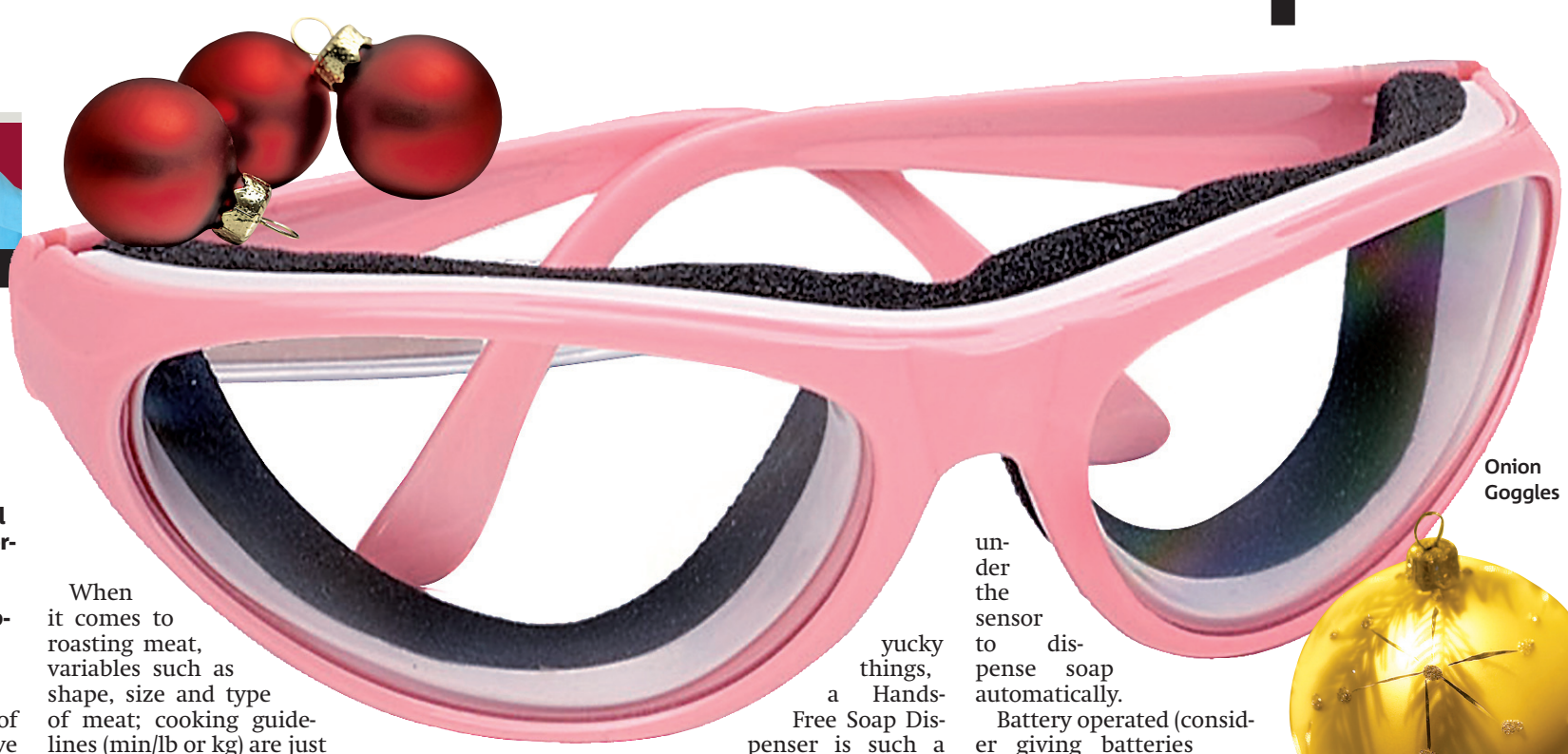
Santa's little kitchen helpers

À **la** carte

Barb Holland

Metro Food Writer

I realize not everyone — OK very few — appreciate kitchen gadgets under the tree. But, for what it's worth (it is a free newspaper), I thought I would pass along some of my favourite small but useful kitchen gadgets. The operative word here is useful. If not useful, they don't clutter my drawers or cupboards for long.



Onion Goggles

Onion Goggles

If you chop a lot of onions as I do and have tried the many ways to prevent tearing, here's one that works. I have bought and given many Onion Goggles to family and foodie friends.

Yes, a little corny looking, but these plastic glasses have a comfortable foam seal that protects eyes from irritating onion vapours. They come with a storage case to keep the goggles clean and avoid scratching. Give with a bag of onions for a gift they'll talk about for awhile. $25.

Remote Digital Thermometers

Aside from a keen cook, every kitchen should have a thermometer, no exception. I particularly like Remote Digital Thermometers.

When it comes to roasting meat, variables such as shape, size and type of meat; cooking guidelines (min/lb or kg) are just that — guidelines. A thermometer is virtually foolproof, so you can kiss overcooked, dry meat goodbye.

A steel probe inserted in the meat and the attached wire remains in the oven during cooking. The base, outside of the oven, displays the increasing internal temperature during cooking. An alarm beeps when the internal temperature you have set is reached.

Remote Digital Thermometer

It can also be used outside of the oven, when cooking sugar syrup for making candy or testing water temperature for bread making are examples. They usually have a timer as well. There are quite a few available and prices range from $30 to $70.

Hands-Free Soap Dispenser

Why didn't someone think of this before? When prepping yucky things, a Hands-Free Soap Dispenser is such a good idea. The sensor dispenses soap touch-free to help avoid cross-contamination. Just place your hand under the sensor to dispense soap automatically.

Hands-Free Soap Dispenser

Battery operated (consider giving batteries and a nice bottle of liquid hand soap with it), $25 to $40.

Immersion Handheld Blender

An Immersion Handheld Blender is a handy gadget for puréeing soups right in the pot or whipping up pina coladas. Get one with a few attachments — a knife blade and container for chopping small amounts and a wire whip — for versatility.

Without taking up a lot of space, this multi-tasker is often just the thing to pull out rather than the big machines. Easier to clean, too.

Price ranges, $30 to $100 (depending on extra attachments).

Immersion Handheld Blender

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

we cater holiday happenings of all kinds.

Mention this ad and get a **FREE GOURMET COOKIE PLATTER** with any $75 catering order placed before December 31, 2008.

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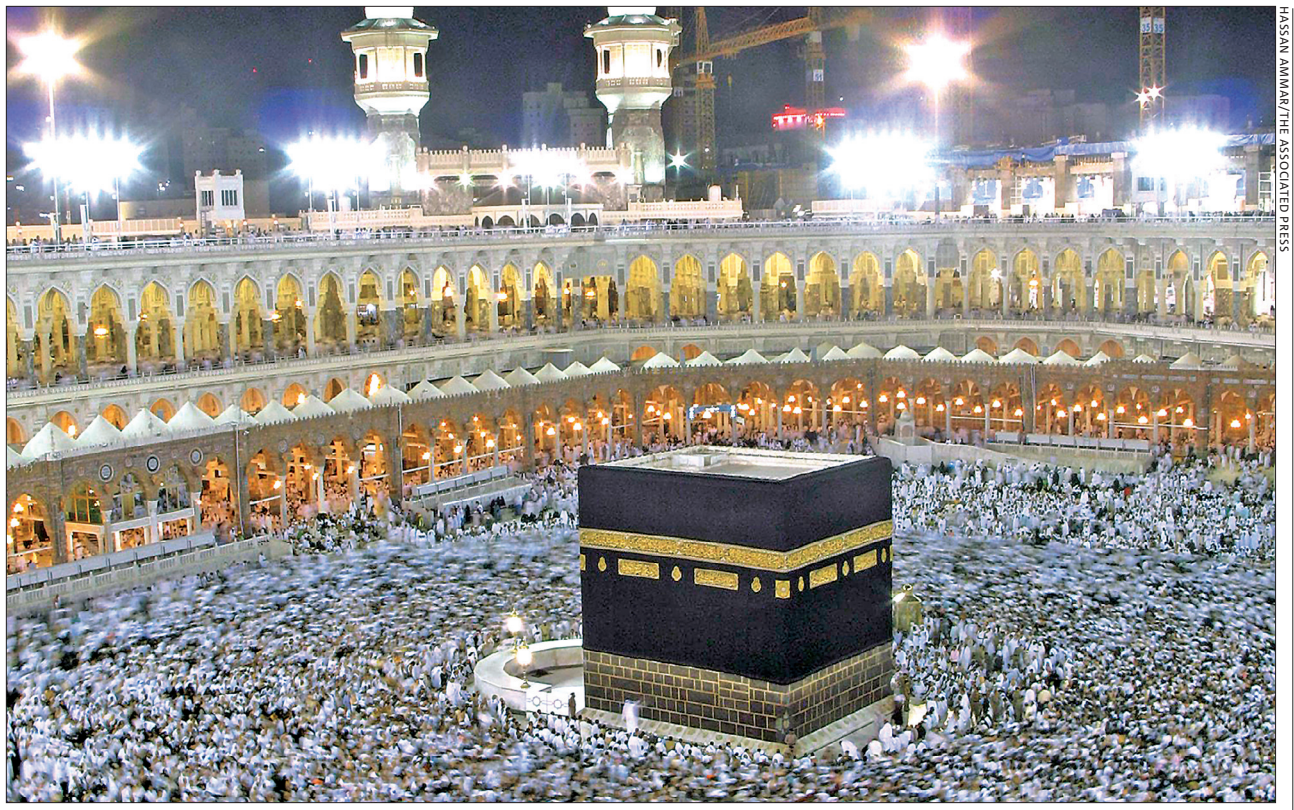
Top seller
Barefoot Contessa Back to Basics: Fabulous Flavor from Simple Ingredients by Ina Garten, a staple on Amazon.ca's top selling cook books list, was number 1 by the end of last week. METRO NEWS SERVICES



HASSAN AMMAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tens of thousands of Muslim pilgrims move around the Kaaba, the black cube seen at centre, inside the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, recently. Islam requires that all Muslims who are financially and physically able to perform the hajj at least once in their lifetime. The hajj begins and ends in the holy city of Mecca, the birthplace of the 7th-century Prophet Mohammed and the site of Islam's holiest shrine, the Kaaba.

Eid al-Adha: The Feast of Sacrifice

Eid al-Adha or Feast of Sacrifice is the most important feast of the Muslim calendar. It concludes the Pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha lasts for three days and commemorates Ibraham's (Abraham) willingness to obey God by sacrificing his son. Muslims believe the son to be Ishmael rather than Isaac as told in the Old Testament. Ishmael is considered the forefather of the Arabs. According to the Koran, Ibrahim was about to sacrifice his son when a voice from heaven stopped him and allowed him to sacrifice a ram instead. The feast re-enacts Ibrahim's obedience by sacrificing lamb. The family eats about a third of the meal and donates the rest to the poor.

Habeeb Salloum is a resident of Toronto and author of numerous cookbooks: Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead: Recipes and Recollections (Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, Regina, 2005), Classic Vegetarian Cooking from the Middle East and North Africa (Inter-Link Publishing Col., Northampton, MA, 2000), From the Lands of Figs and Olives: Over 300 Delicious and Unusual Recipes from the Middle East and North Africa (with James Peters) (Inter-Link Publishing Co., New York, 1995).

"The reason why one-third goes to the family is to keep them humble and so that they eat from the same lamb that they are sacrificing and giving to the poor."

The following recipe is supplied by Salloum. The main dish is a whole lamb, minus the head. One-third goes to the family who sacrificed, bought or prepared the lamb and two-thirds goes to the poor around them (including neighbours, extended family, friends, etc).

The reason why one-third goes to the family is to keep them humble and so that they eat from the same lamb that they are sacrificing and giving to the poor. Eating from the same lamb means the poor don't feel like the family who sacrificed it are above them.

Kharouf Mahshi — Stuffed Lamb

Serves 20 to 25.

INGREDIENTS:

- 20 to 25 pound lamb, thoroughly washed
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons salt
- 4 teaspoons pepper
- 4 teaspoons allspice
- 1/2 pound butter
- 3 pounds beef or lamb, cut into very small pieces
- 4 medium onions, chopped
- 1 cup blanched almonds
- 1/2 cup cashew nuts
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 1/2 cup pistachio nuts
- 5 cups rice, rinsed
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 8 cardamom seeds, crushed
- 6 cups water
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 1 cup honey
- 2 teaspoons powdered garlic
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- l teaspoon ginger

METHOD:

Thoroughly rub lamb both inside and out with a mixture of the lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of the salt. Set aside and allow standing for an hour.

Combine 2 teaspoons pepper and 2 teaspoons allspice. Rub lamb inside and out with this mixture then set aside, ready for stuffing.

Melt butter in a large pot then sauté chopped meat over medium heat for 15 minutes. Stir in onions, almonds, cashews, pine nuts and pistachios. Sauté for a further 10 minutes or until nuts begin to brown. Stir in remaining salt, pepper and allspice, rice, raisins, cinnamon, nutmeg, cayenne, cardamom and water. Bring to a boil and cover. Simmer over medium/low heat for 20 minutes.

Stuff lamb with the contents of the pot, then sew closed and place in a large baking pan.

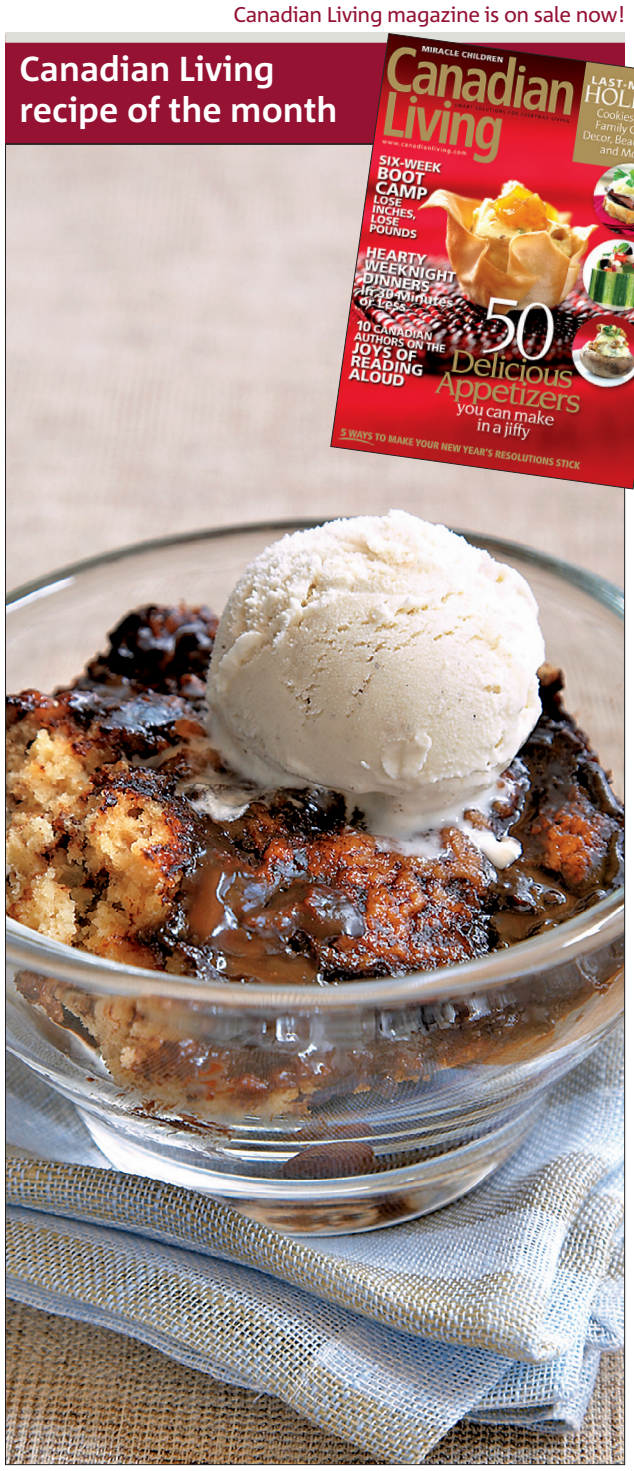
Make basting by combining remaining ingredients. Baste lamb and cover with aluminium foil. Bake in a 300° F preheated oven for 3 hours, then remove foil and baste. Bake covered for a further hour, basting twice.

Turn lamb over, baste, re-cover with foil, then cook for a further 1½ hours or until the lamb meat is tender, basting every half hour. If baste finishes, baste with pan juices. Place lamb on a large platter. Remove sewing thread and serve piping hot along with salads.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canadian Living magazine is on sale now!

Canadian Living recipe of the month



For more great recipes, visit metronews.ca.

Chocolate Peanut Butter Pudding Cake

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup (175 mL) all-purpose flour
1/3 cup (75 mL) granulated sugar
1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
1/3 cup (75 mL) milk
1 egg, beaten
3 tbsp (45 mL) natural peanut butter
3/4 cup (175 mL) packed brown sugar
1/4 cup (50 mL) cocoa powder
1 cup (250 mL) boiling water

METHOD:

In large bowl, whisk together flour, granulated sugar and baking powder. Whisk together milk, egg and peanut butter; stir into flour mixture. Scrape into greased 8-inch (2 L) square glass baking dish.

In heat-proof bowl, whisk brown sugar with cocoa powder; whisk in boiling water until smooth. Pour over cake; do not stir. Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven until cake is firm to touch, about 30 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutritional Info

1 Serving (6 for this recipe)

Protein:	6 grams
Fat:	6 grams
Carbohydrates:	54 grams
Fibre:	2 grams
Calories:	281

Christmas blowout sale

National sunglass distributer Sunglass Safari is offering more than 2,000 brand name styles including Tommy Hilfiger, Bollé and Escada on sale now until Dec. 24. The 2008 styles are discounted up to 75 per cent. Located at 2601 Matheson Blvd. E. Call 905-629-8333 for more information. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Style

A blow away holiday look

Look and feel like a star with a celeb-worthy blow-out at Ritual 2's brand new Blow & Go Bar. All priced at less than $30, the salon offers six holiday hair options: Basic blow out (smooth and glossy), bed head (tousled locks), diffuse (defined curls), pretty premiere (soft, bouncy curls), straight (blow-dried and flat ironed) and big bold (voluminous). Located at 787 King St. W., salon hours are Tuesday to Friday noon to 9 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. To book your appointment or for more information call 416-306-0040 ext. 2, or visit ritual.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Clutching to elegance

A classic clutch is the perfect touch to any holiday outfit

LAURA LEE FULHAM
for Metro Canada

Red La Diva clutch, Town Shoes, $80

Satin gathered pouch with bow detail, Town Shoes, $59.95

Leopard-print clutch, Browns, $275

Red satin bow clutch, Aldo, $50

Dark purple, snakeskin clutch, Old Navy, $19.50.

Shiny gold synthetic leather clutch, Aldo, $30

Hilary Radley grey satin clutch, The Bay, $90

Payless Leighton Clutch in silver, gold and black. $24.99 each.

Purple Clutch, H&M, $16.90 (For stores and availability, hm.com)

Designers dish on ideas for Michelle Obama's inaugural gown

Michelle Obama's to-do list before Jan. 20 surely is long, and somewhere on it must be choosing her inaugural wardrobe.

Whatever Michelle Obama wears first to the ceremony and then the ball celebrating her husband Barack as the 44th U.S. president, she and her outfits will instantly become two of the longest-lasting images of modern history.

And there will be global reviews from real style insiders as well as armchair critics mere seconds after the public gets its first glimpse of the new first lady, who is already considered a fashion icon.

This isn't a fashion decision to take lightly, says Bridget Foley, executive editor of W magazine and Women's Wear Daily.

"The dress will live in perpetuity and it will go into the Smithsonian," Foley says.

"I'd like to see Michelle Obama take the elegant route — and push it," she adds. "I think she should really look around and try something long and curvy — with colour. That would work."

A strong colour, symbolic of a strong, confident woman, was a consistent answer from fashion designers asked about their vision for Obama and a special gown. Other suggestions:

• Badgley Mischka: There should be a little beading or embroidery on her gown to fully bring the dress to life, says Mark Badgley, but it shouldn't be overdone — that would detract from Obama's modernity. They envision her in something like a turquoise gazar gown from their upcoming spring collection. It's a strapless silhouette, with guipere lace down the front and a fishtail hem.

• Zac Posen: He'd turn up the volume even more for the first lady in a bright colour and harness "the power of shape and structure."

• Tracy Reese: "I'd serve up something with colour, a nicely fitted bodice and some ease through the skirt so she could be comfortable but be feminine."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Right: A model wears spring 2009 fashion by Badgley Mischka — the type of dress the designer envisions Michelle Obama dressed in.

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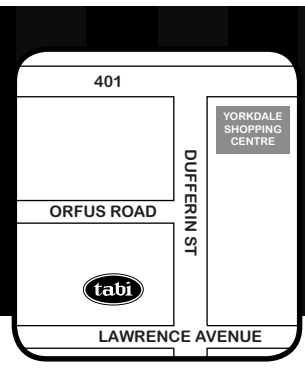

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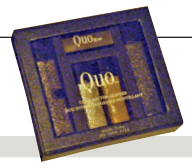

Glam it up New Year's Eve

Style File

Kim Elbo
kim.elbo@gmail.com

ask kim

I was just at a holiday party and got a small stain on my chiffon dress. How can I get the stain out?

First of all, there are different types of chiffon. If your dress is a poly chiffon (blend of polyester and chiffon), then you can wash it and dry it with no disturbance to the fabric. However, if your dress is silk chiffon, then you'll have to dry clean it as water or any other liquids can distort the fabric.

E-mail your style questions to *kim.elbo@gmail.com*.

Vancouver's Kim Elbo has a passion for fashion. Here she shares the latest style tips.

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Designer: BCBG
Shop: BCBG
Address: Various locations
bcbg.com

Studded
Designer: Aldo
Shop: Aldo
Address: Various locations
aldoshoes.com

Off the Shoulder
Designer: Madison Marcus
Shop: Ishara
shopishara.com

Zipper
Designer: Michael Kors
Shop: Michael Kors
Address: Various locations
michaelkors.com

Glitz and Glam
Designer: Tracy Reese
Shop: Wear Else
wearelse.com

Jewelled
Designer: GEOX
Shop: GEOX
Address: Various locations
geox.com

tip: Want to have good luck in love in the coming year? Try this Mexican tradition; wear a pair of new red underwear on New Year's Eve. go to mexico.about.com.

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt
Exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

New Year's Eve dresses and shoes

I'm sure your New Year's Eve (NYE) plans have already been set (weeks in advance, of course!), but have you made plans for what you'll be wearing? Well here's a little guidance to get you going. Shine through the new year and go for glitter and glam — NYE is usually the only time you can wear a full-on sequined dress. Nix the little black dress idea and go for something with colour to brighten up the night. And if daring enough, sex it up with a strapless mini. For your shoes, step into the new year with rocker-worthy studs, zippers and jewelled baubles. If you haven't bought your dress yet and are looking to find shoes first, try buying black based shoes that will go with everything.

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Looking for a new Pamela Anderson
The creator of the hit TV show Baywatch is looking for the next Pamela Anderson to star in a new version of the series based in New Zealand. Anderson starred as lifeguard C.J. Parker in the 1990s series. **IMDB.COM**

Entertainment

Reeves' Ronin
Keanu Reeves has signed on to star in 47 Ronin, according to Variety. Set in 18th-century Japan, the film is about a group of samurai who avenge the death of its master. E! NEWS ONLINE

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Musical of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert coming to Toronto

THEATRE A musical based on the Oscar-winning film The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert will make its North American debut in Toronto next year.

Priscilla Queen of the Desert — the Musical, about a trio of drag queens in Australia, will open at an undetermined date and theatre in late fall 2009, Mirvish Productions announced Tuesday.

The stage show — written by Stephan Elliott and Allan Scott, and directed by Simon Phillips — was a smash hit when it had its world premiere in Sydney in October 2006.

After touring Melbourne and New Zealand and then returning to Sydney, it took in a total of more than $90 million at the box office to become the biggest Australian theatre blockbuster ever.

The European premiere is set for the Palace Theatre in London's West End next March.

A Swedish production of the musical is planned for 2010.

Based on the 1994 film that won an Oscar for best costume design, the musical follows drag queens Tick, Bernadette and Adam as they drive their battered old bus nicknamed "Priscilla" to the Australian outback.

Songs performed by the trio include I Will Survive, Don't Leave Me This Way, and Finally.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Auditions

- Anyone interested in auditioning for the Toronto production of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, can submit a resume and photo to priscillacasting@mirvish.com
- Canadian casting director Stephanie Gorin will also travel across the country looking for actors in their 20s to their 50s, and a young boy aged nine to 11.

Doubt a dream for Davis

Movie **feature**

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Viola Davis may get recognized mostly for playing the tiny role of a crack mother in the 2002 drama Antwone Fisher, but that's about to change — even if it's not for a boost in screen time.

With one lengthy, powerful scene in the upcoming drama Doubt, Davis isn't just holding her own opposite Meryl Streep, she's winning the hearts of moviegoers and critics. Another modest part for the 43-year-old actress, it's already garnered her an award from the National Board of Review and some very juicy Oscar buzz.

"It's impossible to ignore but it's almost impossible to embrace also," Davis said over the phone from Manhattan. "I'm the actor who gets the call from their agent, I go to the audition, I hope I get the job … I'm the working actor, so the Oscar talk, the National Board of Review, I can't grasp it."

"I'm a neurotic actor, are you kidding me? I'm a theatre geek, I work on neuroses."
Actress Viola Davis

It's certainly not an accolade that's undeserved. In Doubt — it opens tomorrow — Davis plays the mother of a child suspected of being victimized by a Catholic priest in 1960's New York.

When confronted by the alarmed school principal (Streep), Davis introduces a startling perspective. It's a rich, revelatory scene that has been described as the "crucible of the story."

Not lost on Davis, she developed her own 50-page biography of the character before filming began.

"I'm a neurotic actor, are you kidding me? I'm a theatre geek, I work on neuroses," Davis said. "It's one thing if you have several scenes, you have an opportunity to show and play different aspects of a character's life and that can inform your performance in fantastic ways.

"But when you only have one scene and you're coming into that scene, you're bringing a whole life into that scene with you."

Besides, when you're working opposite one of the silver screen's legends, you certainly want to have your act together. For Davis, starring with Streep was perhaps the biggest dream come true.

"(It feels like) a big tornado hit just like in the Wizard of Oz," Davis said proudly.

"It feels like I dreamed the biggest dream I could as a kid and Meryl Streep is in the dream, of course — she's always in the dream."

Actress Viola Davis plays the mother of a child suspected of being victimized by a priest in the new film Doubt.

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Dinosaur story dead
Movie producers have ruled out a fourth Jurassic Park blockbuster because the story died with author Michael Crichton. The sci-fi writer passed away in November aged 66 after losing his battle against cancer. **IMDB.COM**

Brandy lacks Human emotion

Coldplay, Common, Alice Russell also drop new music

Brandy

Album: Human
Label: Epic/Sony BMG
Rating: ◍◍½

FOR ALL THIS Grammy-winning singer/actress has endured of late — specifically, a 2006 car accident that resulted in a fatality and ensuing legal fallout from all parties concerned — one would surmise an outpouring of lyrical and musical emotion on Brandy's first new outing in four years. Save for a chilling Shattered Heart, any thankfulness of being alive, being able to love and yearn for love, yada yada yada, is bathed in predictable, repetitive, synth-heavy R&B and all the adult contemporary softness of a white down comforter. Is it really that wrong to occasionally emote some rawness?

Ian Nathanson/for Metro Canada

Music**Reviews**

music@metronews.ca

Coldplay

Album: Prospekt's March
Label: EMI
Rating: ◍◍◍½

WITH A MEGA-SUCCESSFUL album released just a few months ago, Coldplay didn't have to release an EP of left over material from their Viva La Vida sessions. But they did, more likely because they actually like their fans than for a cash grab. The eight-track count is a bit misleading though — three songs are remixes of Viva songs and one is a 48-second piano track. Still, the three new tunes are as good as anything off their recent full-length — especially Glass of Water — while the reworked tunes are a nice treat.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Common

Album: Universal Mind Control
Label: Geffen/Universal
Rating: ◍◍

YOU CAN'T BLAME Common for wanting to rest his overactive brain — for the last few years he's been the go-to guy for conscious, thoughtful hip hop. On his latest he just wants to have fun, teaming up with Pharrell Williams. What follows are bland, been-there-done-that rhymes and beats. Lets hope he gets this diversion out of his system quickly.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Alice **Russell**

Album: Pot of Gold
Label: Little Poppet/ Six Degrees/Outside
Rating: ◍◍◍½

HAD THE LIKES of Amy Winehouse and Aimee Duffy not emerged before her, this U.K. songstress' fourth album would have perked up many ears with her throwback to '60s Motown-meets-Stax soulfulness. What does set Russell apart is her ability to wail away to near ear-piercing screams as if she longs for the attention above the punchy horns and backing choirs. And while she capably works some magic on a slow-burning gospel-tinged cover of Gnarls Barkley's Crazy, much of Russell's efforts come across calculated and flat following the high-energy opening cuts.

Ian Nathanson/for Metro Canada

SONY BMG PHOTO

Human is the first album in four years from R&B singer Brandy.

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HOLIDAY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Getting and keeping your family organized over the holidays can be a daunting task, but do it right and your holidays will be stress-free!

As soon as December hits, most of us get caught up in the whirlwind that is the holiday season. This time of year usually requires a lot of planning, not to mention great organizational skills. To help you have a happy, healthy, and stress-free holiday, we've created a holiday checklist, filled with simple, time-sensitive reminders that will help you stay on track.

3 weeks before
- Create a holiday budget.
- Make a list of all the gifts you want to buy and for whom. Keep a copy on you at all times.
- Make an appointment with your stylist (and/or manicurist, massage therapist, etc.).

(continued online...)

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No marriage for Bynes anytime soon
Don't expect actress Amanda Bynes to walk down the aisle. "I say I never want to get married. I feel trapped with the idea of marriage," she declares in the January issue of Cosmopolitan. **USMAGAZINE.COM**

Network cashes in on Leno's leap

IntelleVision

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

WHAT HAPPENED? Two weeks ago, the likely defection of Jay Leno for ABC to compete with Conan O'Brien, his network-appointed successor, looked like little more than a slap fight between agents, a power play whose significance wasn't resonating far beyond the few square miles beyond Wilshire Boulevard and La Brea Avenue.

Today, however, it seems like NBC's decision to give Leno his own 10 p.m. show, Monday to Friday, leaping from late night to prime-time, was something like betting everything on black.

Increasing the number of unscripted hours on prime-time and cutting back on the hour-long dramas that have filled the slot is playing out like a cross between canceling the Beverly Hillbillies and storming the Bastille.

"The model for network television is basically broken," said Rino Scanzoni, CIO for the media division of WPP, the Dublin-based communications firm, in a New York Times story. "They cannot continue to go down this path," he added ominously, adding that the new Leno show could be "positive for the advertising community."

You get the feeling that all this talk about numbers and integration is leaving wet chairs in boardrooms and offices from coast to coast.

Leno's new show would be even more likely to feature integrated product placement, and interstitials with local news talent that will make affiliates happy, speculated a host of media types interviewed by the Times.

You get the feeling that all this talk about numbers and integration is leaving wet chairs in boardrooms and offices from coast to coast and even overseas.

It's nice to know that someone's going to have a merry Christmas this year.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

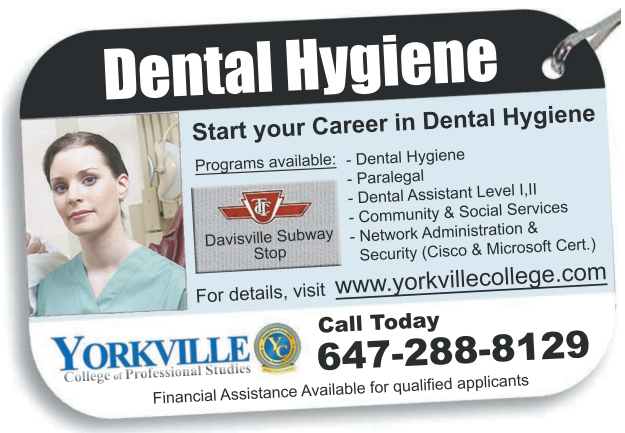
Actor Ruffalo's brother shot self in game of Russian Roulette, lawyer says

DEATH Police cleared a woman arrested in the shooting death of actor Mark Ruffalo's younger brother after being shown evidence that the wound was self-inflicted, the result of playing with a gun, her lawyer said yesterday.

Police records confirmed that Shaha Mishaal Adham, 26, left the Beverly Hills, Calif., jail.

Lawyer Ronald Richards said Ruffalo's gunshot wound to the head was self-inflicted, caused essentially from a game of Russian Roulette. "A series of wrong decisions ... caused an incredible chain reaction of stupidity and bad luck," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Critics pick WALL-E as best film '08

NODS The Los Angeles Film Critics Association has gone populist on its picks for best movies of 2008, choosing the animated smash WALL-E as No. 1 and the Batman blockbuster The Dark Knight as runner-up.

Sean Penn was named best actor for the film biography Milk, while Sally Hawkins received the best-actress prize for the British comic drama Happy-Go-Lucky.

The late Heath Ledger won the critics group's supporting-actor honour for his turn as the Joker in The Dark Knight, while Penelope Cruz was chosen for supporting actress in the Woody Allen romance Vicky Cristina Barcelona, as well as her role in the drama Elegy. Also named:

- Director: Danny Boyle for Slumdog Millionaire
- Foreign-language film: Still Life.
- Documentary: Man on Wire.
- Production design: Synecdoche, New York.

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See complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and purchase tickets at metronews.ca/movies

	TO	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/11/08		265	353	2	TVO	Wright Bros Flying Machine		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Foyle's War "All Clear"		Hermitage-niks	Hermitage-niks	Agenda-Paikin
		211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Survivor: Gabon (N)		The Office (N)	Billable Hours	NUMB3RS		News (N)
		215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
		210	302	6	CBC	NHL Hockey Tampa Bay Lightning at Montreal Canadiens. (HDTV) (Live)						CBC News: The National		The Hour
		214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Ugly Betty (HDTV)		30 Rock	30 Rock	Friends	Friends	News (N)
		212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Hollywood	CSI: Miami		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		(10:01) ER (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
		218	345	11	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Secret Millionaire (N)		Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		X-Weighted		News (N)
		137	763	13	TFO	Panorama		Rêver le francais		*Quai des orfèvres* ★★★ (1947, Policier) Louis Jouvet.				Volt
		-	-	14	-	Cold Case "Honor"		News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
		213	326	15	SUN	Scrubs	George Lopez	Smallville "Toxic"		Supernatural (HDTV)		To Serve and Protect		Grill Rm.
		-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Survivor: Gabon (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		(10:01) Eleventh Hour		News (N)
		-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Name Is Earl	Kath & Kim (N)	The Office (N)	30 Rock	(10:01) ER (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
		-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Ugly Betty (HDTV)		Grey's Anatomy		(10:01) Private Practice		News
		219	346	20	ACH-B	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	*Eve's Christmas* (2004, Comedy-Drama) Elisa Donovan.				(10:01) Eleventh Hour		News (N)
		-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	Secret Millionaire (N)		Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
		-	388	61	PBS	News-Lehrer	Gdnght. Sweet.	Happy Holidays: Andy Williams			Frank Sinatra: A Man and His Music			Business Rpt.
		297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Smallville "Toxic"		Supernatural (HDTV)		CW11 News at Ten (N)		Two/Half Men
		296	654	331	SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dr. Phil (HDTV PA) (N)		WBZ News (N)	'70s Show	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
		298	653	332	TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Family Guy	Family Guy	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smallville
news		502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National		The Nature of Things		National
		500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Planet in Peril: Battle Lines				Cooper 360
		509	504	79	CNB	CNBC Reports (HDTV)				On the Money		The Russian Gamble (N)		Mad Money
sports		405	417	22	net	Heads-Up Poker Champ.		Best Damn Toughman		Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected		Sportsnet Con.
		400	400	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	Madden Nation	NFL Football New Orleans Saints at Chicago Bears. From Soldier Field in Chicago.						SportsCentre
		411	457	58	OLN	(6) The Amazing Race 6		Crusoe "Sacrifice"		Survivorman		Pilot Guides "Vietnam"		Pilot Guides
		417	406	81	SC	Pinks	Pass Time	Pinks -- All Out		Pinks -- All Out (HDTV)		Wrecked	Wrecked	Pinks
family		551	542	25	YTV	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Sabrina-Witch	Sabrina-Witch	Futurama	Prank Patrol	Mystery Hnt.	Adrenaline Proj	Mystery Hnt.
		554	544	45	TEL	Santa Claus	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show		Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	The Critic	Robot Chicken	Code Monkeys
		556	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
cable variety		602	567	27	W	Will & Grace	Friends	Divine Design	House	Confidential	Save Us-House	Divine Design	House	Love It-List It
		570	580	29	MM	Gossip Girl (HDTV) (N)		Instant Star	Instant Star	50 Cent: Money and Power		Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Muchmsc Ctdn
		615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami "Rap Sheet"		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		Manhunters
		700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Villa Ada				Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
		571	581	36	MMM	mmmtop	Back In	Cher: The Farewell Tour		Listed		Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Party of Five
		575	583	38	CMT	Tara Oram's Christmas Carol		Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Gone Country
		616	521	39	SHO	Painkiller Jane		ReGenesis (HDTV)		Trailer Park	Trailer Park	NUMB3RS "Velocity"		House
		620	523	40	BVO	Desperate Housewives		Snapshot	In the Mind ...	*These Girls* ★★ (2005, Comedy)			Bravonews	Law & Order
		601	562	41	SLC	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Bulging Brides	Bulging Brides	10 Pounds	Last 10	The Biggest Loser The winner is revealed.		
		522	506	43	HIS	NCIS		Lost Worlds		Finding the Fallen		NCIS		Crime Stories
		625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	VIP	Choc. News	Daily Show
		600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes on Homes		The Fix	Disaster DIY	Home to Flip	Real Renos (N)	Holmes-Homes
		294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Friends	Friends	*Rat Race* ★★ (2001, Comedy) Rowan Atkinson.				Friends
		576	582	49	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Tales From the Hood* ★★ (1995, Drama), Wings Hauser				American Gangster (N)		Judge Hatchett
		627	528	50	SPC	Lost "Not in Portland"		Star Trek: Voyager		Stargate SG-1		Chuck (HDTV)		Stargate SG-1
		581	566	52	MTV	Busted	After	MTV News	Cribs	The Hills	After Show	Whitney: From The Hills to The City (N)		
		618	524	54	TROP	Beverly Hills, 90210		Make or Break	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier	Family Guy
		603	561	56	FOOD	The Main	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover		Unwrapped	Secret Life of	Jamie at Home Christmas Spe		Restaurant
		261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Darling Buds of May		*A Christmas Carol* (2000, Fantasy) Ross Kemp.			Silent Night	7th Heaven
		621	527	63	STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		TMZ (N)	etalk	Look-A-Like	eTalk	The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
		553	546	65	TRE	Berry Merry	Nght Grdn	Backyardigans	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Sec Star-Left	Rolie Polie Olie	Beren. Bears
		115	711	101	TVA	La Fièvre de la danse (SC)		*Noël avec les Krank* ★★ (2004, Comédie) Tim Allen.				TVA 22 heures	(10:45) La Vraie nature	
		126	730	102	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
		526	507	249	VIVA	Judging Amy		Commander In Chief		The West Wing		Passion	Homicide File	Psychic Inv.
		300	601	301	M1	(7:15) *Days of Darkness* (2007, Horror) Tom Eplin.				*Darfur Now* ★★★ (2007, Documentary)			(10:40) *Apocalypto*	
		305	612	306	PIX	(7:15) *3:10 to Yuma* ★★★ (1957, Western)				*Donnie Brasco* ★★★ (1997, Crime Drama) Al Pacino.				*Absolon*

critics' corner

Darfur Now
If you're still not up on what's been happening in Darfur, this 2007 documentary is a good place to start. It features actor Don Cheadle, whose commitment to stopping the ethnic warfare in this region of western Sudan developed while he was filming "Hotel Rwanda," but more compelling are the stories of locals caught up in the conflict, such as Hejewa Adam, whose 3-month-old son was killed by Janjaweed — government-backed militias. 9 PM on M1

Donnie Brasco
An undercover FBI agent (Johnny Depp) infiltrates organized crime by befriending a low-level hit man (Al Pacino) who vows to teach him how to be a "wiseguy." The biggest crime occurs off-screen when Al Pacino is robbed of a well-deserved Academy Award nomination. Anne Heche plays the small but pivotal role of Depp's abandoned wife. 11:50 AM on PIX

Sex And The City sequel not finalized: Nixon
Actress Cynthia Nixon has downplayed the frenzy surrounding plans for a Sex And The City: The Movie sequel, insisting the cast has yet to sign contracts for the project. **IMDB.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Jessica predicts proposal near

RELATIONSHIPS Singer Jessica Simpson is reportedly convinced that her boyfriend Tony Romo is going to propose.

An unidentified source tells Star magazine that Simpson "is 'convinced' that Tony plans to propose over the holidays."

The pal says Romo let the cat out of the bag by needling her about the diamond she received from ex-husband Nick Lachey.

Simpson's reps deny the story.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Aniston: Stop the love gossip!

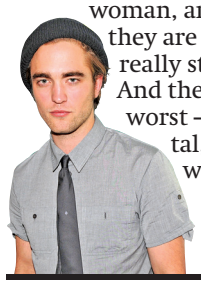
RELATIONSHIPS Actress Jennifer Aniston is "sick" of the interest in her relationship with John Mayer, imdb.com reports.

"I think it's ridiculous, the interest in my life .... I feel like telling people, 'You know what? It's none of your f—ing business.' Seriously, it's enough."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Pattinson likes 'crazy' women

DATING Twilight star Robert Pattinson tells Closer magazine he attracts the wrong types: "The stuff I find attractive in women, I always regret finding attractive. I always like a kind of madness in a woman, and when they are really, really strong. And they're the worst — mental, strong women!"



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Piven's Gold inspires actors

PEOPLE Jeremy Piven's character in Entourage has inspired actors to fire their real-life agents, according to the star.

Piven plays Ari Gold, a straight-talking Hollywood representative, in the hit show, and the role has had a profound effect on actors who watch the series, imdb.com reports.

"The best are the other actors who tell me they've fired their agent because they want a rep who's more like Ari. All you can do is try to tell them not to base real-life decisions on fictional characters," Piven tells New York Post gossip column PageSix.

But Piven is baffled by fans who confuse him with Gold and often finds himself telling them his real name.

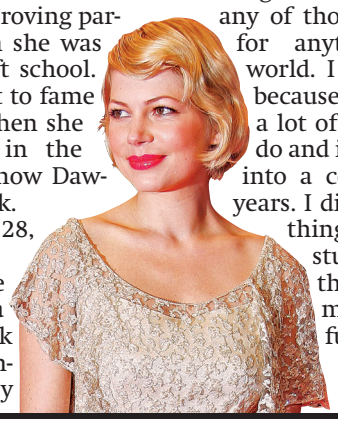
"A lot of fans scream 'Ari!' at me. It doesn't annoy me. I go right over, tell them my real name and that I'm just the actor who plays Ari," he says.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

I did 'stupid, crazy things': Williams

PEOPLE Actress Michelle Williams did "stupid, crazy things" when she was growing up as an aspiring actress, but the experiences helped her prepare for the future, imdb.com reports.

Williams was so eager to pursue an acting career she distanced herself from her disapproving parents when she was 15 and left school.



She shot to fame in 1998 when she appeared in the hit teen show Dawson's Creek.

Now, at 28, Williams can see she took a huge risk by branching out by herself to try to carve a career in Hollywood.

"Hindsight. Isn't it great? The risks of going into L.A. at such an early age are huge," she tells Parade.com. "At the time, I was invincible. I thought I was on top of the world. I didn't realize what I was doing. But I wouldn't trade any of those experiences for anything in the world. I am who I am because of them. I had a lot of growing up to do and it was slammed into a couple of short years. I did stupid, crazy things. But those stupid crazy things prepared me to deal with future."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mariah wants weddings yearly

MARRIAGE Singer Mariah Carey wants to have a wedding every year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Carey, who married Nick Cannon last April, is reportedly planning a lavish ceremony for their first anniversary, and one every year after that.

"We'll definitely get (friends and family) involved in another celebration, though. We've been talking about doing a bigger wedding on our first anniversary. And maybe another one every year," Carey says.

Only eight people attended Carey and Cannon's low-key ceremony in the Bahamas, and Carey, who was previously married to record executive Tommy Mottola, says it was perfect.

"I wanted the opposite of what I did the first time," she tells Britain's Hello! Magazine. "Nick and I wanted it to be about us, no fuss, no worrying about everyone else's opinions. I can honestly say that my wedding to Nick was the most beautiful day of my life. For once it wasn't all about the hoopla."

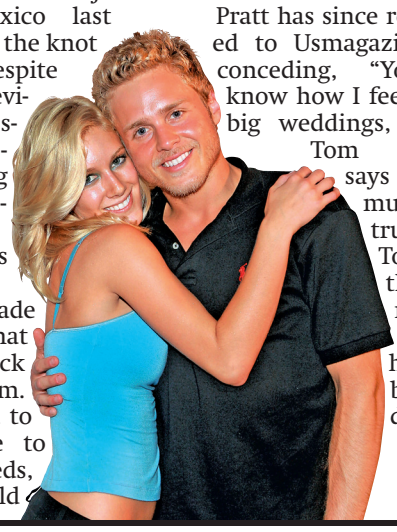
METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Eloping mistake, Cruise tells Spencer and Heidi

ADVICE Actor Tom Cruise has told reality TV star Spencer Pratt he made a mistake by eloping with Heidi Montag, imdb.com reports.

The Hills co-stars jetted off to Mexico last month to tie the knot in secret, despite Montag's previously expressing her desire for a big family ceremony.



Cruise is convinced Pratt has made a mistake that will come back to haunt him. When asked to offer advice to the newlyweds, Cruise told MTV, "If the girl wants the wedding, you gotta do the wedding. It's a special occasion, and she'll remember it forever. Spencer, dude ... you'll realize this later."

Pratt has since responded to Usmagazine.com conceding, "You all know how I feel about big weddings, but if Tom Cruise says so, it must be true. If Tom's the best man, we'll have a big wedding!"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tomei studied strippers for role

CAREER Oscar winner Marisa Tomei studied rocker Bret Michaels' raunchy reality show Rock Of Love as part of her stripper research for new movie The Wrestler, imdb.com reports.

The actress tried pole dancing, too, just to make sure she'd look authentic in her film debut as an exotic dancer.

"I would practise in a dance room with a bar and a mirror, like a ballet studio. I watched Rock of Love, that reality show with Bret Michaels, where he's trying to get a wife and they're all strippers. That was my closest association to the actual world of it."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Swift has strict dating rules

RELATIONSHIPS Newly-single teen singer Taylor Swift has written a set of strict dating rules to ensure she attracts a better boyfriend than her ex Joe Jonas, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

"I have this rule: I don't call a guy first. And you can't ever send two text messages in a row," Swift tells TheBoot.com. "If you're like, 'I need to talk to you' all the time, (or) 'Why didn't you call me back?'... If you're that girl, then nobody's going to want to date you."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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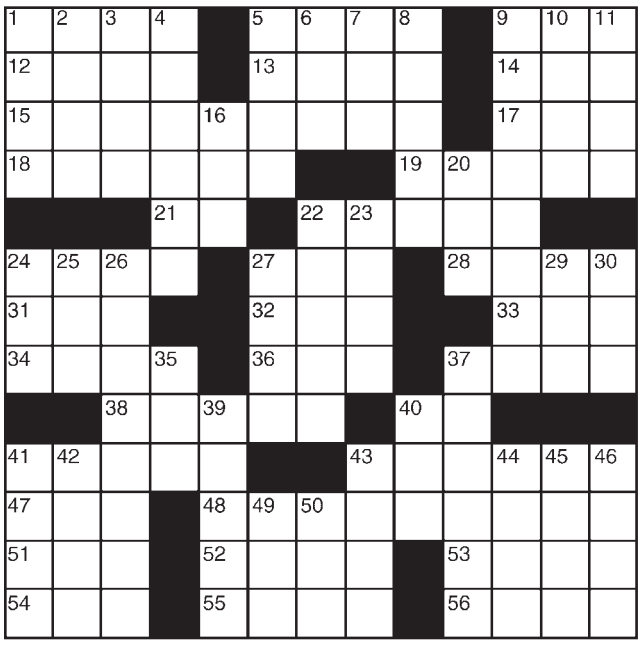
TWN incorporates MSC data

Today Variable -3° / -6°
Friday Variable -1° / -11°
Saturday Partly cloudy -3° / -5°

WeatherEye... Free App Available on iPhone.

Take Five

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**



Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		4	1			5		
6	7			2	9			
5			6				2	
7				5				9
		9				4		
8				3				1
	1				8			5
			4	1			3	2
		6			2	7		

Crossword across

1 Maintained
5 Flavour enhancer
9 Expert
12 Reed instrument
13 Follow instructions
14 Lubricant
15 China
17 Vitamin stat
18 Reddish blue
19 Skiers' mecca
21 Perform
22 Bean or pony
24 Info
27 Bawl
28 Kennel cries
31 Lennon's lady
32 Raw rock
33 Bribe
34 Bacterium
36 Performance
37 Catherine — -Jones'
38 "Honeymooners" role
40 Poet Housman's initials
41 Brother of Groucho
43 Collar
47 Disencumber
48 Photographer's resume
51 Work unit
52 Reverberate
53 Recedes
54 Teensy
55 Call a halt to
56 Back talk

Crossword down

1 Pueblo dweller
2 Black, in verse
3 Parliament VIP
4 Make up your mind
5 Unaccompanied
6 "The — Daba Honeymoon"
7 Mainlander's memento
8 Theatre critic Kenneth
9 Dolphin
10 Carnival attraction
11 "The Good Earth" heroine
16 Id counterpart
20 Pigs' digs
22 Veranda
23 "Yeah, right"
24 Follow relentlessly
25 Inseparable
26 Bears' food?
27 Daytime drama
29 Cauldron
30 Hot tub
35 Singer Davis
37 All but one in a million?
39 Runs easily
40 "Bow-wow!"
41 Captain's group
42 Take on
43 On
44 Exile isle
45 Parent sharers
46 Pitch
49 Halloween abbr.
50 Pi follower

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

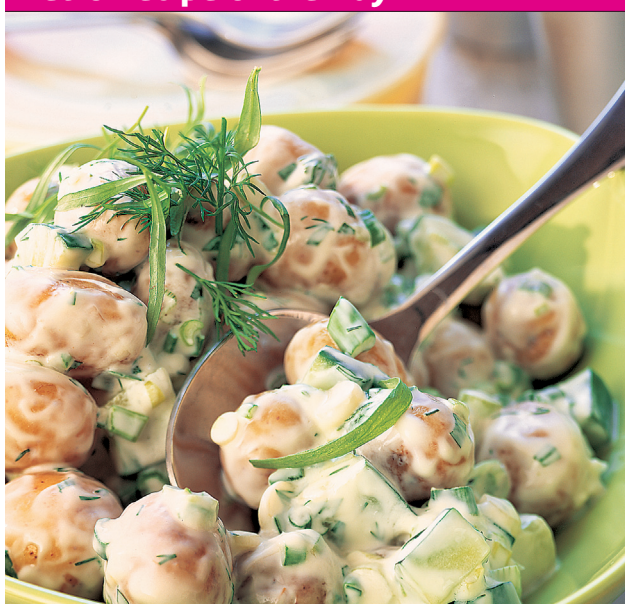
A	G	U	E	■	W	O	K	■	A	P	S	E
M	O	S	T	■	E	R	E	■	S	U	E	R
P	U	S	H	C	A	R	T	■	P	L	A	N
S	T	R	O	L	L	■	C	H	I	L	L	S
■	■	■	S	I	T	■	H	E	R	O	■	■
M	A	P	■	P	H	D	■	W	I	V	E	S
O	P	U	S	■	Y	E	W	■	N	E	R	O
B	E	L	C	H	■	W	E	N	■	R	A	Y
■	■	L	O	A	D	■	L	O	U	■	■	■
B	E	M	U	S	E	■	L	A	P	T	O	P
A	L	A	R	■	P	U	S	H	P	I	N	S
S	U	N	G	■	O	N	E	■	E	M	U	S
E	L	S	E	■	T	O	T	■	R	E	S	T

3	7	4	6	2	1	5	8	9
2	8	6	9	7	5	4	3	1
1	9	5	4	3	8	2	6	7
5	4	2	1	8	3	9	7	6
7	6	8	2	4	9	1	5	3
9	1	3	5	6	7	8	2	4
4	3	9	7	5	2	6	1	8
8	2	1	3	9	6	7	4	5
6	5	7	8	1	4	3	9	2

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



New Potato Salad

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs (900 g) tiny new potatoes, washed
2 tbsp (25 mL) dry white vermouth or dry white wine
1 tsp (5 mL) white wine vinegar, or to taste
Pepper to taste
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
4 tbsp (60 mL) low-fat mayonnaise
6 tbsp (90 mL) plain low-fat yogurt
1/2 large firm cucumber, diced
1/3 cup (75 mL) scallions, thinly sliced
4 tbsp (60 mL) chopped fresh dill
2 tbsp (25 mL) chopped fresh tarragon
Fresh dill and tarragon leaves to garnish

METHOD:

1. Cook potatoes in a saucepan of boiling water just until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain and return them to the pan. Set over a low heat and shake them around for a few minutes to evaporate any moisture. Transfer the potatoes to a mixing bowl and leave to cool for about 5 minutes.
2. Sprinkle vermouth or wine and wine vinegar over potatoes. Season with pepper. Turn potatoes to mix, then leave to cool completely.
3. Meanwhile, mix garlic, mayonnaise and yogurt in a small bowl until smooth.
4. When potatoes are cool, add cucumber, green onions, dill and tarragon. Spoon on mayonnaise and yogurt mixture, and stir gently to mix. Serve at room temperature or chilled, garnished with dill and tarragon leaves.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A difficult learner forces an investigation. Indecision presents a formidable dilemma. An opponent brings things to conclusion.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Timing is crucial to finalize a deal. A man presents an absurd challenge. Alertness is required when visiting old folks.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
A loved one's insignificant indulgence is allowed. Optimism can lead to clearer thinking. An older man's helpfulness may be denied later.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A close friend's trust is an eye-opener. Take responsibility for someone's heart. Your patience will be rewarded.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Avoid any risk-taking while travelling. You're too eager for the weekend. Use your head and all will be well.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Be there for someone who expects you to make the first move. A friend pulls you out of a bad situation. A computer failure will seem suspicious.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A milestone is reached in a love affair. Thoughtlessness results in a shake-up. Crowds can get nasty when someone backs out of a promise.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Resist delectable food to keep your weight down. Keep no secrets from your friends. A lost pet causes heartache.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
A heartrending story will shock and dismay you. A friend will sustain a storm of criticism. Situations will engineer their own corrections.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A haughty man creates a disturbance. You might not get a job finished. A lack of co-operation can be rectified after lunch.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Something new will give you pleasure. Roll up your sleeves and get to work. You're willing to fight for dignified treatment.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Be skeptical if offered investment advice. Someone is arranging a private deal. Work as hard and as quickly as possible.

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Erin Mills Shopping Centre
Fairview Park Mall
Lime Ridge Mall
Mapleview Shopping Centre
Masonville Place
Pen Centre Mall
Shoppers World
Square One Shopping Centre
Stone Road Mall
White Oaks Mall

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10
10
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10:10am
Mon, Oct 30

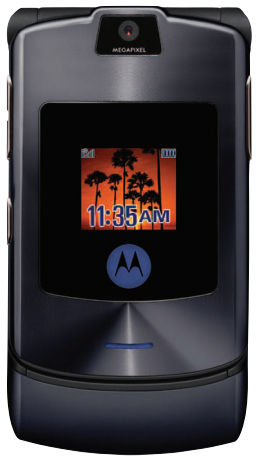
11:35 AM
10/12/2008
Text Messages (0)
Outlook E-mail (4)
Tomorrow: Lunch at Amie's Place
Bluetooth
Profile: Normal
Start
Message

11
35
AM

cingular
MOTOROLA

11:35AM
10/12/07

FRI 07/06/07
11:35am
Recent
Messaging
CLR


11:35AM

11:35
11.10.07

Big Girls Don't Cry
Fergie
02:37/04:28

MOTOROLA
11:35 AM
09/02/2007
Text Messages (0)
Outlook E-mail (4)
Tomorrow: Lunch at Amie's Place
Bluetooth
Profile: Normal
Start
Message

02:43
08:42
Big Girls Don't Cry
Fergie
The Dutchess

11:35
FRI 10 NOV 06

11:35

VGA 4X ZOOM
05/25/05

11:35

12:00 PM

11
35
AM

2.0MP
11:35am

VGA ZOOM 4X
10:10AM

11:35AM
Bluetooth
10/12/2007
Options
Main Menu

VGA ZOOM 4X
11:35PM
THU 11/10/05

11:35
FRI 10 NOV 06

11:35

11:35AM
10/12/07

2.0
11:35am

Love You Lately - Daniel Powter

11:35

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